

# **Criticizing Ben**

**Quips, Quotes, Puns and Complaints**

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## Table of Contents

### Criticizing Ben

<b>Abortion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Advice</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Aging</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>America</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Ancestors and Old Stuff</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Authority</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Banksters</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Battle of the Sexes</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Bees and Ants</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Bible</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Biblical Archaeology</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Bugs</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Business</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Capitalism</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Children (young and old)</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>China</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Church</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Civilization</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Climate Change</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Competition</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Conflict and War</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Conforming</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Conspicuous consumption</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Conspiracies</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Contractors</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Cooperation</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Crime</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Criticism</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Cults</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Debt</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Democracy</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Denominations</b>	<b>75</b>

**Table of Contents**  
**Criticizing Ben**

<b>Diversity?</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Dogs (Man's Beast Friend!)</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Dreamland</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Driving</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Drugs and Alcohol</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Economics</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Elites</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>End of Days</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Experience</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Faith</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Family and Relatives</b>	<b>123</b>
<i>Fecal Matters</i>	<b>124</b>
<b>Feelings</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>Food and Drank</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>Freedom and Free Speech</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Freedom of Association</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Freedom Of Religion</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>Friends, Romans, Countrymen (Lend me your...)</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>Generation <i>Gasp</i></b>	<b>142</b>
<b>Genius and Stupidity</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>God</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>Golden Rule</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>Good and Evil, <i>Us and Them...</i></b>	<b>152</b>
<b>GOSSIP</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>Government</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>Granny Nanny State</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>Greed</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>Green Acres!</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>Grouphink</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>Haters, Sickos and Sociopaths</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>Homo habilis (aka "Handy-man")</b>	<b>170</b>



Quips, quotes, complaints, puns, observations, common sense, nonsense, you decide. "I'm just looking for the bridge"- Zep

## **Abortion**

Right to lifers have it half right, we shouldn't destroy human life in the womb... but shouldn't we be kinder once babies are born? You'll never be "compassionate conservatives" until you figure out that dropping bomb's the wrong way to deal with *nuisance* neighbors. As Neil's song implies, there's really no such thing as a "kinder gentler machine gun hand."

Is it off subject to compare the *collateral damage* of war to abortion, and to ask *what is* innocent life? Is an embryo more innocent than a late-term fetus or a one-year-old baby? Despite the propaganda, neither; drones, pilots or suicide bombers are very discriminating when they take life. It seems that the people we *like* are innocent while those we fear or hate deserve no protection. The distinction of being in the womb or in the world is largely cosmetic.

He wants me to "catch and release" the Daddy Long Legger's that foul the porch but says it's okay to abort humans. You won't grant a human fetus the same protection you recommend for spiders and fish... how strange!

You don't have to be a fundamentalist to be pro-life you can simply be a person who believes in the sanctity of human life. Although not an "expert" I believe something sacred occurs when egg meets sperm and strands of DNA do their dance. I wouldn't interfere with a woman making whatever choice she wants very early on, especially when her life's at stake or when she's been a victim of rape or incest but don't support allowing people to terminate her fetus's life under other circumstances. Yes, it's a terrible decision and it's between her and her maker at the outset but it's also between society and *our maker* as the days and weeks pass.

**Why are some people who're grossed out when a chicken egg cracks revealing a partial embryo, not grossed out by the gruesome details of an abortion? Perhaps it's because they choose to remain ignorant on the subject. A look at the new 3-D ultrasound images of unborn babies might startle them into a different understanding.**

**There are millions of women who've had abortions and many will support abortions for the rest of their lives because it validates their world view, or the decision they made. If what they say at church is true, they're forgiven and can cross guilt off their list.**

### **Advice**

**"Men give away nothing so liberally as their advice"...  
Rochefoucauld**

**Get better at doing what you should, worse at what you shouldn't and you'll probably do okay.**

Funny how fools are quicker to give advice than successful people. Misery loves company, bumbler have the time and they want to promote their views like everyone else. Successful people on the other hand are busy but once activated can be gold mines of information!

Related note - you can reach some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time, but you can't reach all the people all the time... kudos to Abraham L. for the inspiration!

Conventional thinking and conventional wisdom are closely related and the former's even worse.

Free advice can be good and paid advice can be poor but it's usually the other way around... the free stuff usually comes from people with an agenda, which should be a tip off that the advice is tainted by the givers motives... whether they know it or not.

People give me unsolicited advice which I receive like a potted plant. Older people seem to give the most, perhaps sensing they're running out of time... maybe they should write a book and maybe I should say something other than "thanks" since their advice is usually quite conventional but that would be *impolite*.

Not giving kids too much advice is a good idea... as long as they're not risking life or limb it's good for them to figure things out for themselves.

**"If age imparted wisdom, there wouldn't be any old fools"...**  
**Anonymous**

## **Aging**

**"You can get a new heart but you can't get a ride to the store"... Jane Gross**

**Life's all about beating the odds and sooner or later our luck runs out. So enjoy it...whether your one or one-hundred if you're alive you're beating the odds.**

**I keep hearing that life should be about creating memories but don't we just get old and forget them? Maybe that's what makes photos important...at least they jog our memory.**

**If this was a ball game I'd be in the second half if not the fourth quarter. Between Mother Nature and father time, aging's a losing battle but don't give up the fight!**

Completing all your projects is an indication that our time's about up. Don't perfect the lawn, the house or anything else, that's like telling the man upstairs you're ready to go. Unless you're ready to *check out* keep having something to do! I hope to be fighting weeds etc. for a long time!

When you make a list, challenge your memory by making it vague so that you'll have to exercise your noodle a bit. Leave things in the wrong place and later on try remembering where they are. Make it something that results in a slight negative consequence if you don't remember... that's good motivation to use your brain!

I had to take my belt in a notch but it's not weight I'm losing... its ass! Increasingly I'm more belly and less butt.

One nice thing about getting older is being able to turn down physical things you don't want to do without having your masculinity challenged. I suppose that turning 70 will allow me to turn down even more things but I'm not looking forward to it anyway.

Why take testosterone when I hear about all the side effects... apparently the only thing it makes larger is my prostate.

One minute I'm a well-oiled machine the next I'm a jalopy. That's the paradox of middle age... we're peaking in some areas and *losing it* in others. We see the edge of the cliff approaching but can't take our foot off the gas!

As I drive to the store I can't remember why I'm going there... guess I don't need to be taking this trip.





World Trade Center Rising,  
seen from Hoboken, NJ 9.12

**Not that there's any reason to, but couldn't they take DNA from Ötzi the Iceman and clone him? I don't think he'd be the man he was but arguably he'd be reincarnated...**

**I hear people say, "I might just have a few good years left." So what does a "good year left" consist of? Is it being able to have sex, go for a walk, or something else? It should be more than just sucking air!**

Old age is when work becomes an expensive hobby... I know old folks who love to work and it does keeps their minds active but it also drains their bank account faster than sitting in a rocker.

**"When an old person dies a library closes"... Asian proverb**

## America

**"I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually"... James Baldwin**

**I think America's the greatest county in the world... for most American's that's a no brainer. What I'd like to know is who do you rank, second, third and fourth... that list is the *telling* one.**

We may indeed need God's help as we've positioned ourselves to fight nefarious and sundry "enemies" all over the world. So what should we do? Certainly not disarm... we've made ourselves a prickly bed but it's not too late to toss the war mongers off our back.

***If the American empire falls and the barbarians at the gate prevail, how will they treat us? Will they have learned all kinds of *good things* from us and be humane or will the time honored tradition of pillage, plunder and revenge be the flavor of the day? I don't want to find out and think a combination of a powerful deterrent, less interference abroad and a more thoughtful foreign policy are a better defense than drones.***

**America represents the best and occasionally the worst of the human spirit. The wide open nature of the *new world* allowed people with great aspirations and greed to *possess* the land *occupied* by the disorganized tribes living here. I can't justify what was done to the natives but there's evidence they had few qualms about killing each other in pursuit of their own objectives.**

**We should stop trying to win the world over with Big Macs and Bunker Busters... don't you attract more bees with honey than vinegar? American culture has plenty of honey and the rest of the world will respond more favorably to positive overtures than to threats and ultimatums. The rest of the world also has tremendous things to offer and we should consider their submissions with an open mind.**

**We've done a lot of things right and a few things very wrong. Some sweep our mistakes under the rug, others apologize and a third column wants to make reparations. I fall into group two... even *if* this is the greatest nation in the world we should make it even better and not rest on our laurels!**

I love America but principles are more important things than flags and countries... does saying that make me crazy or a hypocrite?

According to Winston C., "Americans can be counted on to do the right thing, after they have exhausted all other possibilities"... I hope he's right...

Here are just a few great accomplishments by Americans, small pox, polio and measles vaccines, declaration of independence, Constitution, Bill of rights, First Man on moon and winning the cold war... not bad!

America's on a perilous path... we may maintain our power, but not necessarily our *greatness*. Our power may keep Americans in line but we may *transition* from citizens to subjects... to make it worse most of us won't know the difference, or even care.

America's a unique combination of a warrior culture and the most religious society in the western world. We send out

more soldiers and missionaries than any country in the world and they're usually of the same mind. One way or another America's planning to "save" you... whether we do it the easy or hard way's up to you!

**What some people don't like about Obama is that he's the quarterback now... they think blacks are fine in other "skill positions" but don't want one in the ultimate position. Most however they will close ranks and support him if there is a *national emergency* as long as he orders us to bomb the "right people."**

**Increasingly America's moving in the direction of old Europe. We have a hereditary class of elitists who control society and bleed the middle class like there's no tomorrow.**

**We were at a casino and I had to wonder... is this what our troops are fighting to preserve? You could say *freedom* to go to the casino's one of the things they're fighting for but when I look around this place I don't think it's worth it... George, Tom and Ben must be spinning in their graves!**

**We're always seem to be civilizing dysfunctional societies and sometimes we're "rewarded" for our efforts. The Indians surrendered most of their land and some of my countrymen expect "grateful" Iraqis to do the same with their oil... hmmm.**

**A lot of innocent people may have to pay for the actions of the politicians they voted for. I think the average American is kindhearted but no better or worse than people in other countries. I frequently hear that American's give more to charity than any other country but most of that money probably goes to churches, synagogues, temples and mosques. The money therefore goes to *special interest groups* that use it further their goals...**

**Our ancestors came to this country for loftier principles than the right to party, shop and watch TV... heck you can do that almost anywhere!**

**Immigrants might pronounce it “dweam” or “drream”... but regardless of the accent, the American dream seems to be a big house and fancy car.**

**Your comments suggest that *good* Americans should *agree*, instead of think... I think you’re missing what being an American’s all about!**

**It’s naïve to think other countries will change based solely on us setting a good example but it’s a start and may be better than thinking we can change them by force.**

**If it’s true that we spend more on our military than the next ten nations combined, we must be very scared of the rest of the world or adamant about the need to dominate them.**

**“The Americans are truly a lucky people. They are bordered to the north and south by weak neighbors and to the east and west by fish”... Otto von Bismarck**

### **Ancestors and Old Stuff**

**“Our greatest responsibility is to be good ancestors”... Jonas Salk**

**We tend to think of ancestors as hopelessly square whether it’s music, dance or what their opinions on the issues of our day would be. They deserve more credit, as they were dealing with their problems at least as well as we’re dealing with ours and the wisdom they had was every bit as great as ours.**

**I like my ancestors... even though I only met a few of them. I don't revere them, just admire and respect how they made it through dust bowls, depressions and the like.**

**I'm not saying worship your ancestors, just don't blow them off... after all they *may* have feelings too!**

**"There is no king who has not had a slave among his ancestors, and no slave who has not had a king among his"...Helen Keller**



### **Authority**

"I find that a person that does not have goals is used by someone who does"... Ken Blanchard

Authority over others is usually based on one's possession of punitive powers. Those in power have the means to wreak havoc on the lives of others even if they are morally bankrupt.

No one should be forced to do something because someone else is stronger, smarter or richer than they are... but these have always been the source of one person's authority over another.

**Question tradition, authority and what you hear on the news.**

**For years some have said, “we just need to kill more of them”, the point being they’ll eventually surrender and accept our *terms*. The verdict is not yet in but so far all this strategy has produced, is death, destruction and more people who hate us.**

**Compromise but don’t capitulate. When an antagonist’s strategy is to whittle away at your rights through negotiation you have to draw the line and the sooner you do so the better!**

**"How can it be that they'd lie to us and then demand we give our lives for that lie?"... Vietnam draft evader**

### **Banksters**

**"You (bankers) are a den of vipers and thieves. I intend to rout you out, and by the eternal God, I will rout you out"... Andrew Jackson**

**In light of quotes like Jackson’s and, “Permit me to issue and control the money of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws!”, often attributed to Mayer A. Rothschild, how can we dismiss that the bankers are keen to be our masters?**

**The banksters have woven themselves into the fabric of our society like a fungus. There is no getting rid of them, they are a cancer not easily excised without possibly killing the patient.**

If the banksters want to save our economy, they and their allies will have to dispense with these “little wars” and start a big one. Many will agree with them, convinced that war will save their jobs and the world.

The *radio guy* called the Occupy Wall Street protestors “vermin” then ended his show with “God bless America. I wonder if Jesus would also call the protestors vermin and if he’d side with the bankers and billionaires? Didn’t he say something about rich men and the eye of a needle?

The banksters warn that if they don’t get their way we’ll all be crushed... sad thing is, we may be crushed regardless of what happens to the banksters.

Wall Street is an entire industry that should never have been created... or at least never been allowed to morph into the monstrosity it’s become. Although joint stock companies are an excellent business model, the idea that stock brokers should “earn” huge commissions, not to mention be able to manipulate the market, is an affront to the many positive aspects of capitalism. If only Andrew Jackson and Thomas Jefferson’s point of views had prevailed... these gents may be spinning in their graves!

“The real truth of the matter is, as you and I know, that a financial element in the large centers has owned the Government ever since the days of Andrew Jackson”...Franklin D Roosevelt



## **Battle of the Sexes**

**“Nature has given women so much power that the law has very wisely given them little”... Samuel Johnson**



**When Sam stated the above women couldn't vote, now of course they have that right as well as the power that nature bestowed on them. That being said when we work together men and women make a great team!**

**There's always been competition between men and women for control of society. Neither should capitulate nor rule, instead the goal should be harmony and cooperation. This, despite the fact that complete success may be unachievable. Don't be a male chauvinist pig or a *wife supremacist* and things just might work out😊**

**As long as men act like men, women will be angry, frustrated or both. If we change to the point that we no longer irritate them, they'll no longer be interested in us other than as drones... whether or not that would alleviate their tendency towards frustration I know not.**

**Women want to be wooed, not felled like trees...**

**God made women irresistibly attractive to men which makes perpetuation of the species likely but he also made them too tantalizing, or men too horny. Since he knew about makeup, high heels and alcohol why did he create men with such little self-control?**

**As soon as women received the right to vote they embarked on a campaign of conquest. I don't begrudge them taking charge of their lives and for the gains they've achieved... neither do I applaud them for going *so far*.**

**The Palestinians are the only ones trying to get back to the 67' borders...**

**Women may be more obedient to society's laws and more**

respectful of what society calls God's laws, although they are no more obedient to the latter. Their list of top ten transgressions is just a bit different than mens'.

The fact that the expression "hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" has been around since at least 1697 is evidence that women take personal affronts seriously indeed!

Why do we like women so much? It's not just one thing or another, it's the entirety of the creation.

Unlike other large mammals where the female comes into heat once or twice a year, women are either *highly receptive* once a month or estrous may have no relevance at all - depending on who you believe. On the other hand, it can be argued that some men are *in heat* 24/7 leading to a contradiction of purpose. No wonder we've populated every nook and cranny of the planet and are poised to do the same to every corner of the universe... that's if we don't self-destruct.

I think women are more instinctual than men... we're ruled by instinct and hormones when it comes to sex and war but women seem ruled by these in even more phases of life. For example a woman's instinct to protect her children seems stronger than man's although he's likely to do so too. She on the other hand needs no other reason to defend her young because her protective instinct is overwhelming!

"Though we adore men individually, we agree that as a group they're rather stupid"... Mrs. Banks Having established that man has given away the farm I tend to agree!

Arguably women have been oppressed since time immemorial but their response has always been to soldier on... they are not subservient like dogs they are independent like cats.

**Ladies, I would like to learn more about the history of *your people*... it runs congruent to ours but isn't the same.**

**If men are from Mars and women from Venus then isn't one sex ruling the other akin to being ruled by aliens?**

**Correct me if I'm wrong but it seems women like a good squabble now and then and if there's none to be had they'll make one... for better or worse we men folk are pretty good at providing a reason to start one, if not always a good one.**

**Garrison Keeler said "men worship their ancestors and women worship their descendants." If that's true it coincides with men wanting to continue their blood line and women wanting to make babies with the best men they can find.**

**I like to observe women in their natural habitats which includes; churches, malls, bars and beaches. Not being on the make, I watch them with wide wonder as if observing a completely different species. We don't ask directions on the street and women don't ask for them in the mall. We explore the great outdoors, they seem to prefer exploring the great *in* stores.**

**Of course beautiful women spell trouble for men... its karma or something. I guess it's only fair that if we're to enjoy their company we must pay the piper!**

**Women can be naughty and we can be bad, they can be bitches and we can be ass holes, just as important they can be wonderful and we can be good!**

**Women are adept at using our hard wiring against us, while we find little benefit in turning the tables. We're wired for sex, while they're wired to chat, adore babies and try on clothes. Adoring babies is good but the other two are**

questionable and encouraging them creates no opening for men in our *quest*.

If humans have been around for 200,000 years and until 20,000 years ago men often forced themselves on women as a matter of course, what does that imply about our hard wiring? Twenty thousand years is only 10% of 200,000... does that mean that for 90% of our “history” being able to refuse sex was the exception not the norm for women? Has this prehistoric status quo left its mark on modern humans? Does this mean that women are wired to; want, expect or hate being “taken” by men? I’m guessing there’s a bell curve for this, just as there’s one for men. I mention it because some of women’s fantasies as well as *some* of men’s involve taking or being taken. These “instincts” may have served a purpose but now cause problems.

Regarding who causes the more trouble, men or women... I think it’s a photo finish... a dead heat.

There’s a power struggle that goes on within every relationship, be it a marriage, friendship etc. Women are not our adversaries, they’re our wives, daughters, mothers and lovers, but they’re also very determined and their world view is sometimes diametrically opposed to ours. If you capitulate, the future will be fundamentally different for your grandchildren... and almost certainly worse if you share male *points of view*.

If we had the sense to view women as people instead of objects, they *might* appreciate our maturity and we might be less susceptible to being conquered by their charms.

So what is the shelf life of a beautiful woman? I’m not sure, but it seems to be getting longer all the time... thank God. Which brings up the point that when dealing with attractive women it’s easy for men to get bamboozled. I don’t want to be

**insensitive but don't forget in a few years their beauty will fade and their grip on you weaker, with that in mind, you might be able to level the playing field... good luck.**

Funny, a woman can always find a man to go to bed with her and a man can always find a woman to talk to... getting either to do the opposite is the hard part.

**These beauties we adore are simply nascent grannies, because the mindset of all women is best exemplified by grandmas. Once a young woman has found a mate and started a family, her opinions and world view become closely aligned with granny's. That free-wheeling period women have before marriage is a blip on the radar screen after which and for the rest of her life, priorities become family, tradition etc. Even little girls think and act like little grandmas... it's only during the mating game stage that women deviate from this *norm*. This is fine and there's a great amount of good to be said for grannies but *alas* I don't think they should rule the world.**

**Men no more consider the consequences of sex than women can avoid those thoughts.**

**Though not blank, a woman's face is a canvas upon which a well-trained artist can create a masterpiece!**

**My strong willed friends aren't worried about women gaining more power and rights than men. They can charm, bluster or bully their way past the protective rights that women have won. It's the average Joe who doesn't throw his weight around that I'm worried about. So while it's good for women to have equal rights, the law shouldn't stand on Joe's... that my friend is an abomination.**

**"Women marry men hoping they will change. Men marry women hoping they will not. So each is inevitably disappointed"... Albert Einstein**

## Bee and Ants

**“As busy as a Bee”... John Lyly 1759**

**We all have the capacity to be tools like bees and ants, some of us act like worker bees and other’s like soldier ants. Though not nearly as hard wired as insects, we’re far from immune from reacting to stimuli and accepting these roles.**

**Ants and bees aren’t much when it comes to individuality but they get away with what they can. Usually it’s drinking too much nectar or not working as hard as the queen demands. No wonder they bite, the little grumps are under constant stress!**

**Some early human dwellings resembled termite mounds which looks like evidence of evolution to me. For some reason we evolved for millions of years while other species stopped progressing millions of years ago. They benefited from *honing their* instincts, we benefited from *forgetting* ours.**

**Animals that are part of a swarm or colony instinctively behave in ways beneficial to their “super organism.” Humans tend not to unless forced... the more intelligent a creature, the more likely it will act in it’s perceived best interest instead of the “best interest” of the group. A beast won’t act insane unless it’s rabid, but humans with our intelligence and free will do so at the drop of a hat.**

**Africanized bees have spread north hundreds of miles a year, Scientists want to know why European bees are losing out in the competition with African bees. They’ve learned that the African queen emerges from the larvae stage a day earlier than the European queen and like most *royals* upon emerging kills the competition...**

**The crowd blew Vuvuzelas at the World Cup in South Africa and they sounded like killer bees.**

**Live to work, or work to live... the former is true of ants and of many humans but we at least have a choice in the matter.**

“The whale is endangered, while the ant continues to do just fine”... Bill Vaughn



Bean Blossom, Indiana



## **Bible**

**“With faith all things are possible”... Judeo-Christian saying**

**The Bible’s an extremely valuable historical record, full of great wisdom. It’s also said to be the ultimate authority on all matters and to carry God’s stamp of approval... IMO these claims are substantiated by faith alone.**

I’ m noticing a pattern... my wife is New Testament and I’ m Old Testament... actually we’ re both a little of each. According to the church I think we’ re supposed to be enamored with the New Testament, but I’ m starting to think the old book’ s even better. It can’ t match the passion of the Christ story but it has at least as much wisdom with in its pages... conventional and otherwise.

The New Testament is also full of great wisdom but page per page, contains even more *impossibilities* and exaggerations... not to mention what those crazy enough to come out and say it might call psychobabble, conventional wisdom and stating the obvious. The last two of which need to be stated and restated repeatedly if they’ re ever going to *sink in*.

**Some people are interested in finding the truth in as verifiable a form as possible, while others seek only reassurance that they won’t go to hell. This latter group has little interest in verifying of the Bibles incredible claims and are primarily interested in how to avoid Gehenna... such is human nature.**

**My wife suggested I have a Bible study with a respected friend from the church. He is very firm in his beliefs, so I think the study would either be me against the Bible, which I don't want, or me becoming his project, which I don't want either. If I am to have a Bible study, I'd like it to be with people of various persuasions, not just confirmed believers.**

**Are the holy books and the dominant religions Godly inspired, humanly conspired or some combination thereof? Just wondering...**

**I denounce nothing in the Bible but admit it contains things I find unconvincing... Do your own research and don't believe everything the religionists tell you any more than you'd believe everything that anyone tells you.**

**Funny, the descendants of the Bible's authors have largely switched from religious writing to screen plays and sitcoms... I'm glad they have a sense of humor. A thousand years of religion culminated in the Bible and a thousand years of comedy in Seinfeld.**

**I haven't the brains or experience of the Bible's authors. It was written by generations of; brilliant, thoughtful, inquiring people. That being said, I think it's a mistake to largely forsake the generations of brilliant, thoughtful, inquiring people who have come and gone since Biblical times. There has been an explosion of; information, wisdom and experience collected by people in the last 2,000 years and we would be foolish to consider it all *second rate*.**

**I used to think the Old Testament was the cruel part of the Bible but after reading the first few pages of the red letter New Testament, I'm not sure. Actually both the old**

and the new testaments are full of beautiful and wise passages, as well as scary and threatening ones.

I see the red letters as a combination of mostly liberal ideology and old time religion... nothing wrong with that but I will say I'm not entirely smitten.

According to the local church I'm evil, stupid and/or defective if I don't believe every jot and tittle in the Bible. That a heavy trip to lay on people but they're certain they're right and that it's for your own good... hmmm.

Why would I accept as the Gospel truth what Constantine's pressurized council of Nicea canonized any more than I'd accept the news as pronounced by NPR, Fox or any other single yet biased source of information?

Did Galileo, Washington, Franklin, Da Vinci, Newton, Copernicus, Lincoln, Einstein and other giants of history think the Bible was God's inerrant message? I don't think so and at least one of them suffered the consequences, but that gradually led to reason gaining greater credibility. Now the pendulums swung and again there's pressure to proclaim our unwavering belief in its inerrancy. At least they're not burning *heretics*...at the moment that is.

A cool thing about the Bible is the promise of eternal life in some form of incorruptible *body* for the faithful. That's wonderful, because no matter how much medical technology advances, we eventually become a pile of bones, ashes. My question is, the application of that teaching and if it's actually true that the billions of people who haven't accepted Jesus, are forever tormented in hell, or destroyed in a lake of fire? My opinion matters very little but it seems there could be other *post-life* scenarios that the God of creation has worked out. Despite the religionists' *admonitions* not to, I support

considering what those scenarios might be instead of living in fear of using the good sense that God gave us.

Call me naïve but I think the most important messages in the Bible are things like, the golden rule and beating swords into plowshares. Instead of automatically believing what it says about *who's good* and *who's bad*, I'm more inclined to respect its teachings on *what's good* and *what's bad*.

### Biblical Archaeology

“Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence”... Carl Sagan

Funny...the above applies equally to the arguments of believers and skeptics.

Despite having uncovered significant evidence confirming certain Bible stories, Biblical archaeologists are still labeled heretics by some in the church... I suppose their finding would have to be favorable 100% of the time to be considered anything else.

Faith based acceptance of religion is fine if you're so inclined, but so is questioning the veracity of religions, especially in light of history and science. The 16<sup>th</sup> century church taught that the earth was the center of the universe and Galileo spent his final years under house arrest and others were burnt at the stake for such *heresies* but eventually the church accepted the evidence and has even considered placing a monument honoring Galileo on Vatican grounds!

Religionists encourage others to read their books, but if you suggest they read *un-approved* history or science and you may be called an apostate. Anyone who exclusively studies only

one side of an issue is engaging in self-indoctrination. Sacred writings may be beautiful and inspiring but I don't see how people with inquiring minds can be attracted to religions that discourage them from *due diligence*. There may be tons of circumstantial evidence for their books but there's very little of the direct kind.

They find fossils from prehistoric oceans in the mountains of New Zealand and Cro-Magnons buried in layers above, with and below Neanderthal skeletons going back tens of thousands of years. Are these evidence of a very long history for modern man and the earth being billions of years old, or is this just false evidence planted by the devil? Is the Bible the truth about creation, partly true or were the writers recording ancient myths and legends from when scientific inquiry was in its infancy and archaeology an unknown discipline?

I don't believe the Bible's creation story is true but I don't entirely buy the scientists creation story either. The Bible's was probably born of myth, legend and limited knowledge, while the scientific version which has been evolving for a couple hundred years is based on knowledge, conjecture and ideology.

Biblical archaeology increasingly shows the Abrahamic religions to have evolved, or heavily borrowed from the cults of Sumeria, Egypt and others. Like most religions the Abrahamic ones are schisms based on earlier schisms and they continue spawning spin-offs on a regular basis.

They tell you to think like a child regarding religion... otherwise you are accused of intellectualizing spirituality. Perhaps there're times to think like children and times to think like an adult... even when it comes to religion. In the realm of spirituality pure intellectualism is flawed but so is naivety. There are hucksters waiting to mislead people but

**you may also miss enlightenment by closing your mind to anything outside of the religious tradition you've grown up with. If religion is such an important subject why should we be close minded on the subject?**

**“Egypt was troubled by the horrible asp...Mister Charles Darwin had the gall to ask”... R.E.M.**

### **Bugs**

Ants, see them, kill them... unless they have sense enough to stay out of your house... which is rarely the case.

The wasp sat there on the wall seemingly waiting for me to dispatch it... it was like suicide by cop, but in this case my slipper was the gun.

Of all the creatures on earth, bugs have the least respect for humans... are we wrong to return the favor?

### **Business**

**“I want to put a ding in the universe”...Steve Jobs**

The customer isn't *always right*, in fact he's no more likely to be right than the business person. The phrase is a marketing slogan, designed to get people in the door... what happens after that varies considerably.

**Since customers aren't always right, my willingness to placate them depends on the balance in my checking account. If someone gets sick at my grill I eradicate the germs best I can while jumping through as few hoops as possible.**

**In business “job one” is making the sale, fail at that and you won't have to worry about job two, which is doing it right.**

**First we were blackmailed by the bankers, now the uber rich say they won't *create* more jobs if we take their loopholes away. After caving to bankers we'll soon see if the rich have our balls in the same vice.**

Going on a sales call or job interview? Show up on time, look your best and be prepared. Improvisation's fine but preparation trumps it every time!

**The lion feels no remorse for killing but what about the salesman who *stretches the truth* to put food on the table? The situations are only partly analogous because the lion has no alternative but we usually do. Does it matter that we feel remorse for our actions, especially if we don't change our ways?**

**What about the fellow who begs, borrows or steals? He's at the extreme end of the curve and may genuinely believe that's the only way he can survive. Some will tell you God condemns *this* or forgives *that*, but very few people will not have *fallen off the wagon* one way or another in their lifetimes. Meanwhile the money spends, no matter how it's been made and those who see the mote in your eye and despise how you've made it want very much to help you spend it!**

**I used to hunt mega-fauna occasionally bringing home Mammoth sized jobs but things changed for the worse... now I bring home Rabbits and Squirrels.**

**I remember telling Sonny that a guy can always make money but I was dead wrong... that was the boom, then came the bust!**

"There are no rules here - we're trying to accomplish something"...Thomas Edison

## **Capitalism**

**“The problem with socialism is that eventually you run out of other people’s money”... Margaret Thatcher?**

**Some investment gurus advise us to invest in the BRICs or other developing economies while others believe the U.S.A. will rebound as it *always has*. I believe our demographics will be a challenge to our recovery although maybe not a fatal one *yet*. To many of the new immigrants come from countries where graft and corruption are endemic and there may be too many intent on continuing those *traditions* in their new country.**

**Herman Cain commenting on the “Occupy Wall Street” crowd said, “if you’re not rich, don’t blame the rich — go out there and work for it. You have to earn it” and Anne Coulter, called them demonic. I don’t disagree with Cain and find Coulter true to form but wonder who would Jesus support, the demonstrators, the banksters or neither? Just wondering...**

**Many immigrants and natives are embracing the prosperity gospel, which is fine but they don’t seem as keen on the Protestant work ethic that made it possible. Instead they believe in miraculous deposits to their bank account and mortgages being paid off a la Ernest Ainsley’s TV ministry or Obama dollars. God surely can do this but I doubt he does and the American tax payer can’t afford to bank roll lackeys either its wrong and unsustainable.**

**The Insurance industry is somewhat akin to a capitalist version of socialism, where many take on the risk of the few, albeit for the profit of those working or investing in that industry.**



## Grand Central & Chrysler Building NYC April 2012



When completely unrestrained, capitalism can result in slavery... that's why the horse needs a bridle. Competing economic systems are as bad or worse and need to be reined in even more.

**We're told that the rich should have tax breaks because they create jobs, but it seems to me we're overstating the number of rich people who are creating jobs. Many inherit wealth or earn it through their investments in the stock market and companies whose stocks rise the most tend to be those firing U.S. workers and moving offshore. What's wrong with giving people a tax break for finding and keeping a job for themselves? Granted that's only one job, but it's better than creating one more person on unemployment or welfare.**

### **Children (young and old)**

**“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!”... Psalm 127:3-5**

**Children young and old because it's common for the elderly to turn back into children...**

**You're going to have challenges your entire life but your twenties will be one of the toughest decades. If you've had parents to rely on in your teens, your twenties can be like being thrown to the wolves. Your thirties and beyond will be just as challenging but if you've survived your twenties, you at least have some experience to help you make it through.**

**Hair and eye color is only the tip of the iceberg for designer babies, people will want their children to be; assertive, intelligent, life of the party and born leaders!**

**I will not defend the man in our town who murdered his wife because she was getting ready to move to Hawaii and take the kids... but I'll criticize the system that would allow her to do**

that -- unless he's proved to be a violent threat. One parent shouldn't have so much power over the other.

We can spend lots of time saying, "you don't have to tell me that", or we can accept that parents will always *think* they know what's best for us and try holding our tongues.

When the Lioness kills does she grieve, offer her victim a prayer or thank God for her meal? Does she grieve when a rogue male kill her cubs so she'll come into season? Can any analogy be drawn between lion and human behavior? Did the Sabine women bond with their Roman kidnappers...did the abductors feel guilty?

A recent study says, "rich kids hate their parents." I wonder how true that is and I wonder if it means poor kids love theirs?" In any case it would surprise me if all rich kids hate their parents and think most kids have some kind of love hate relationship with their *pater and mater familias*.

Funny...our kids don't want our advice but when calamity strikes, suddenly it's our fault for not warning them! There're some lessons we want our kids to learn but we don't want to be the ones to teach them. If and when they learn we're grateful, especially if we've managed to remain above the fray and *appeared* to have clean hands.

What's worse, being "the guy" who lives with his parents through his twenties and gets an education, or being "the guy" who can't support himself?

I was disturbed when you said you were a lot like you know who and now I wonder if it's true? I can encourage you not to ignore the gifts you were born with but whether or not you reach your potential is up to you. Though highly capable *you know who* thinks its society's fault that he's missed the boat. FYI boats are leaving all the time, so get on board!

**As my kids seem to have lost their self-confidence I would tell them, no one's going to hit you and don't be loyal to idiots. Keep these things in mind and you will make better decisions and regain your mojo.**

**What we tell our kids, matters less than what our actions show them... is that where I went wrong?**

**If we constantly solve easy problems for our kids, how will they ever learn to solve tough ones? Let them do things for themselves.**

**Is it too late for me to be a strong father? Since my kids are in their twenties it's going to be a challenge!**

**Young people can choose between the wisdom of the ages, or of those whose lives demonstrate that misery loves company. Though this seems like a no-brainer, apparently it's not.**

**Instead of being concerned about who my kids marry, I'm trying to focus on just hoping they are happy. I tried to keep our lineage alive and must accept that it's neither in my hands or the most important thing in the world... which isn't to say I've given up hope.**

**Tragically, not all of our children will "make it." Today this is feared by parents but virtually impossible to comprehend, much less prepare for. A hundred years ago it was taken for granted that some of our children would die, which along with a lack of contraception and the need for labor resulted in very large families. In some countries people follow that same plan... another words, they don't plan.**

**You should support any child you *produce* emotionally and financially. If you won't then society should and in exchange it should "exact" a pound of flesh from irresponsible parents.**

Some kids turn out good no matter what and a few turn out bad no matter what... the rest are in between. The same is true of religious people... some latch onto the messages of love and peace, others the messages of hate and violence and most are somewhat ambiguous.

You're back was out, you were upset and fervently told us the one thing you thought you could count on was your strength, but now you didn't even have that. It occurred to me later that your greatest strength is *between your ears*.

I'm not sure I believe in generational curses, but bad behavior may indeed impact future generations. Take child rearing, lousy parenting often leads to disadvantaged offspring, who may in turn tend to be poor parents, perpetuating poverty, domestic violence and addiction... in a sense it's a generational curse.

We long for the old days when kids didn't move cross country and everyone lived close together. The problem was, even if they moved cross county it could take days to get there with the rudimentary travel of the time. In the future our kids might be in a different solar system but thanks to worm holes and hyperspace engines visiting them take no longer than a cross country flight!

The way we feel about our parents, our kids feel about us and that's how their kids will feel about them. It boils down to people loving their parents and LOVING their kids!

Father and son relationships are difficult... both want to be loved and admired, yet we can't help competing and *occasionally* judging each other... ouch!

I see why the dad in the Bible gave his prodigal son so much. Despite being rich the dad only had so much to give and he was interested in all his kids succeeding. By giving the

prodigal the most he hoped the kid would *make it*. This frustrated his other kids but since they seemed more on the ball, Dad rationalized that they'd make it without his help. The caveat is that the chances of this working are about 50/50... by trying to help, that Dad walked a fine line and may have ended up being an enabler.

“... So just look at them and sigh and know they love you”... Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young

## China

“It was easy to recognize the rise of China before it became a reality, this is going to get interesting”... Fareed Zakaria.

I wonder if Mr. Zakaria was referring to the famous Chinese proverb, about living in *interesting times*.

We keep telling China to play by international rules but they refuse or just give lip service. Problem is we made the rules and we're used to getting our way but that's impossible with China. They outnumber us 4 to 1 and have plenty of nukes ... not a rosy scenario for those wishing to remain king of the world.

Won't the Chinese eventually demand democracy and other concessions from their government and won't that help us in the long run? We're concerned with what will help us in the long run, which is natural but the Chinese like other people we'd like to *nation build* into compliance, haven't had a democratic society in five thousand years, so it's not certain they'll desire it in the future. Our trump card may be Christianizing the Chinese who have taken to capitalism and may find the *prosperity gospel* just as intriguing.



**So once again the natural alliance between the U.S. and Israel comes to the forefront. Israel is threatened by Iran and the Arabs and we feel threatened by the Chinese. The Templar knights and their eternal enemies may decide there's no time**

like the present for Armageddon...from what I've heard Christendom wins hands down but I'd rather not see it.

The pundits say China's command economy doesn't need public acceptance or consensus to move forward with major initiatives, which may give them an advantage over us. We have to consult with special interest groups, bankers and lawyers to determine if something's not only in our best interest but also in the best interest of our "key allies." George and Ben would have found this rather peculiar.

China may have always been the most populated *country* in the world, which may explain why they've always had dictatorial governments of one kind or another. Is there something in the nature of the Chinese whereby they're more accepting of totalitarianism, or do they really crave freedom? Their rulers have always used brute force to keep the multitudes under control... a crude but in their opinion effective method. Unfortunately when so many people are crowded together in a relatively small space, force is what ruling cliques use to "maintain order." The same thing is seen in the middle east, where the populations are smaller but arable land is limited and precious beyond belief.

"Sent me off to a foreign land to go and kill the yellow man"... Bruce Springsteen.

From what I've seen there's nothing yellow about the yellow man.

The US has refused to sign the prohibition against cluster bombs, along with; Russia, China, Pakistan, and Israel... fine company indeed! These countries have decided that such weapons which kill indiscriminately and remain deadly for years are necessary to guarantee democracy -- or whatever it is they stand for.



**We're mostly worried about our trade deficit with China but few Americans realize we're competing with SunTzu and he means to win.**

If it's true that China has more *genius level* students than America has students then several things come to mind. First it's amazing we've managed to be more innovative than them, second I wonder if the Chinese are like savants? If so they're not the "rain man" variety, instead they're fully functioning... so look out world here they come!

**“Let China sleep, for when she awakes, she will shake the world”... Napoleon**

## **Church**

“The person who accepts the Church as an infallible guide will believe whatever the Church teaches”... St. Thomas Aquinas

Is it just me, or do most new churches look like they've been designed by Walmart's architect? Cheap metal or block exteriors full of people doing their spiritual shopping and satisfied when their cart's full... sometimes with junk. The hand crafted stone or wood churches are a thing of the past... now it's get em in, get em out, take their money and tell em their saved!

**It was a church where people clapped loudly, especially the man sitting two feet behind me. It was also an obedient congregation, dutifully amen-ing when asked to and finally leaving in an orderly fashion when the pastor announced, “you are dismissed.” Nothing wrong with that, I just hope he doesn't tell them to tar and feather anyone.**

**When they wear conservative clothes, stop coloring their hair and wear no makeup are their tongues less sharp? As far as I can tell it doesn't change their nature one iota. Neither does**

it change a man's when he makes similar cosmetic changes or professes to be more religious than he used to be. He still gets a excited when a pretty girl walks by but possibly exercises more self-control. The biggest thing increased religiosity does is make people feel even more "better off" than the rest of us.

Christianity has always held the moral high ground because it doesn't advocate conversion or death and it has a more effective tool... conversion or damnation.

I'm rushing to rendezvous with my wife at church and a Clapton song comes on the radio... it's nice to listen to a few minutes of the music I like prior to listening to an hour of the music she likes. Most of their music will be tolerable and few songs very nice but for me at least, few compare to the best of Clapton!

Attending church is such a good thing that I must be a heel and wasting my morning for not going. It's not worth arguing the point but it seems more like a bi-weekly indoctrination session. They learn good moral lessons and that their not better, just *better off* than those poor hell bound souls who haven't joined the club.

I had a good thing going... for years only attending on Christmas, Easter and Mother's Day but that's over. Now although I'd as soon go to the dentist, I'm "invited" more often. I usually get something good and something irksome out of it which I can't say about the dentist who increasingly pushes x-rays and other procedures. The pastor also has bills to pay and likewise appeals for money but at least he's furthering God's work... or so I'm told.

The Medieval cathedral with its spires and stained glass windows has given way to the mega church and the video

screen. The message has changed a bit too... here they're appealing to a mass audience so the fire and brimstone's diluted to a level the flock can *tolerate*. For a good old fashioned tongue lashing folks can go down the street where the pastor's a bit less concerned with filling the pews to capacity.

Funny how *regular* Christians react when they're told they'll go to hell if they don't start speaking in tongues. I don't know if it's a case of egg on the face or *getting ones just deserts*. Anyway some hedge their bets and join the more exclusive club, while others react by arguing or splitting from their more legalistic brethren.

Tongues, conversion disorder, altered states and mass hysteria... is there any connection? Those who *have the gift* are sure it's genuine and seldom if ever openly question *their experience* as doing so would lead to a massive loss of face.

I'm more comfortable expressing surprise to God that he'd send non tongue speakers to hell than I am expressing that to church members... he's been mum and they don't like to get *too specific* either.

**Everyone closed their eyes during the prayer and opened them during the sermon... without meaning any disrespect I sometimes do the opposite.**

**We're told its good to have racial and ethnic diversity but when it comes to religious diversity we're taught the opposite. While most religions agree that all people are valuable, loved by God and worthy of respect they don't see religious diversity in that same light. As far as they're concerned only their religion is true to God and worthy of respect and preservation. They're goal is usually to be victorious and replace other religions... kind of like race relations a hundred years ago. Funny its taboo for people of a particular ethnicity to declare their intent to take over the world but religions have no such prohibition.**

**One religion may ultimately destroy its rivals but it wouldn't be long before fractures occurred and it would schism into new sects and religions.**

**"Every day people are straying away from the church and going back to God"... Lenny Bruce**

## **Civilization**

**"Civilized men are more discourteous than savages because they know they can be impolite without having their skulls split"...Robert E. Howard**

**Humans have always acquired territory by killing their neighbors animals rarely go that far which doesn't say much about us being *higher than the beasts!***

## **Climate Change**

**“Preservation of our environment is not a liberal or conservative challenge, it's common sense”... Ronald Reagan**

**Some say global warming's impossible because the atmosphere's far too big for man to affect, but look what we've done to the oceans and land. Hundreds of species are extinct, fisheries are devastated, air and water is polluted.**

**On the positive side we've reversed a few things and there will be winners and losers. The Polar bear's loss may be the Ringed Seals gain and people living in coastal areas may lose while people elsewhere may gain.**

**A major storm produced 12 inches of snow and people said that proves that there's no global warming. I doubt the storm proved anything but climate change is probably a more accurate phrase than global warming. Anyway it's the trend that counts not what happens in a single storm. Just like in finance, the trend can be your friend or your foe.**

**Even *if* climate change is a fait d'complete we shouldn't abandon our efforts to slow it down. At the same time, we should allocate more resources to successfully adapt to the changes if they are inevitable.**

**Inundation of coastal areas would be a catastrophe beyond comprehension only exceeded in horror by another ice age which some predict we may be sparking. Just imagine the problems associated with much of the northern hemisphere being unfit for habitation!**



**Ringing the bell from the USS Indianapolis on Memorial Day**

**We should invest in alternative energy even when it's not economical but we shouldn't bankrupt the treasury. Unfortunately the die may have been cast and change seems to be coming so we should invest in mitigation. As far as developing nations who will be negatively impacted, we bear some responsibility and should help them, but not according to their demands. Right or wrong they already blame us for**

**many of their problems and they'll blame us for this too...  
and they might be right!**

**Climate change like evolution has become as much a religious issue as a scientific one and many have *decided* that man has nothing to do with it. *Conveniently* it's future generations who'll pay the heaviest price.**

**The ocean's changing for the worst, jelly fish are increasing and taking over in some areas. Is this a symptom of the ocean dying or were those nasty blobs sent by Mother Nature to fight the infection called mankind?**

The President of Toyota said we still need big trucks and pointed out that you can't move a cement mixer in a Corolla. That's true, but a Corolla can pull a trailer with a cement mixer on it. The point is, don't kill a fly with a bazooka... there's nothing wrong with using as big a vehicle as one needs, but using a huge guzzler when you don't need it is foolish. Eventually the gasoline market will punish those who supersize imprudently.

It's likely humans will have an impact on any ecosystem they encounter or create in space. Hopefully we'll have positive impacts on the heavenly bodies we encounter but our record of exploitation suggests we might devastate everything we land on. It's our nature to exploit and to husband... heck if we weren't so competitive, we wouldn't have risen above the apes to become earth's dominant species?

**"A changing environment will affect Alaska more than any other state, because of our location. I'm not one though who would attribute it to being man-made"...  
Sarah Palin**

## Competition

**“Winning isn’t everything it’s the only thing”... Vince Lombardi**

**I’ll have to disagree with the Coach on this one...**

**“I get knocked down but I get up again you’re never going to keep me down”... Chumbawumba**

**I don’t dispute the wisdom of the above quote but it contributes to a world where people are constantly knocking each other down... Fortunately it is easier to knock folks down than keep them there.**

Life’s a competition where a few give up completely, others give up partially and most soldier on.

We don’t want to admit that life’s a competition but it’s as cut throat now as it was when homo-sapiens struggled against Neanderthals. Today it’s races, religions and ethnicities fighting for dominance and in some cases survival.

**There will always be competition between men and women, so the battle will continue as long as we have two sexes. An author said she doesn’t want a completely female dominated society but didn’t specify exactly how female dominated she wants it to be... hmmm.**

**Even if it’s a *fair competition* that determines who dominates it’s little consolation to those who lose and disappear. Defining what’s fair seems impossible anyway and when one population subsidizes another because of guilt, the so called *even playing field* becomes a quagmire.**



The gals at church are discouraged from wearing makeup, coloring their hair or wearing anything revealing, but they still find ways of “standing out” from the crowd. Beautiful dresses, fantastic hair do’s, accessories, padded bras and high heels are all the rage and they often surpass the beauty of their less religious friends. These girls have learned to try harder than their counterparts who know that mascara and blond hair is all that’s necessary to turn men’s heads!

They now estimate there are 300 sextillion stars in the universe. If God made that many stars, each potentially with planetary systems, there’s either lots of life evolving out there, or God purposely held back. Since he’s not an underachiever, we’ll either find competition out there, or unlimited resources once we *reach the stars*.

Competition has been shown to be useful up to a certain point and no further, but cooperation, which is the thing we must strive for today, begins where competition leaves off”...  
Franklin D. Roosevelt

## Conflict and War

“Weakness is provocation”... Donald Rumsfeld

Yes, and so is provocation... Mr. Secretary

We protest very little when our troops are sent halfway round the world to kill or die. Bees don’t protest when they die for the hive... but they rarely travel more than a hundred yards in the process. I would protest less if we were defending our own land instead of *liberating* others while covet their resources and hate their culture. Time will tell if our wanderlust will *serve us well* or lead to our demise.



**Louis Vuitton, Las Vegas 2011**

**Seniors elect chicken hawks, while fewer young people vote and instead fight the wars that maintain the status quo and *grow* their elder's portfolios.**

**The Mexican American Snore and the Snore of 1812 weren't really "snores" but compared to the Civil War and WWII they paled in comparison.**

Conflict occurs between the closest friends and family members because our interest sometimes differ... *trying to work things out is in everyone's best interest.*

Instead of spending our national treasure on foreign adventures and religious or energy wars, we could spend those trillions on cures for; cancer, flesh eating bacteria, diabetes, paralysis, heart disease, skin for burn victims, etc. The cures to these would give us more leverage with tyrants than lead and explosives.

Societies ruled by despots and dictators may be more susceptible to change from the top down and these bullies are likely to be interested in technology that could save their worthless lives. So why not let them buy medical technology and let its magic trickle down to the average person. If they live longer instead of dying from drone strikes everyone will be better off.

So when will they beat their swords into plow shears? Will it be when they've defeated the entire world or when they get tired of killing each other? Yes, there is evil so we don't want to make those plow shears *too soon* but is it really necessary to obtain unconditional surrender from everyone we disagree with? That's a prescription for perpetual war and *ha, ha*, those who profit from it are smiling all the way to the bank. Granted we must not capitulate but neither should we dominate, subordinate and humiliate others.

There's been a rash of Afghan *allies* shooting U.S. soldiers causing American's to scratch their heads in disbelief and further distrust of Muslims in general. Our leaders would like to pacify the Middle East or at least extract ourselves without losing self-respect but this is difficult since we demand total victory while they see martyrdom as the path to paradise. We've been taught we're the unstoppable force and

that there are no immovable objects out there but I wonder if that's really true...

**Winning all the time is unnecessary and can be counterproductive, be it in wars or arguments with friends. Maybe it has something to do with karma or the old saying that living by the sword leads to dying by it.**

**In Africa innocents are murdered by the millions, limbs cut off entire villages of people and women traded like livestock. Despite these outrages we wreak no havoc, instead focusing *our attention* on oil rich Middle Eastern nations that pose a threat to *our allies in the region*. The Middle Eastern is far from perfect but the west has made things even worse with hundreds of years of interference in their affairs. Anyone who has visited the region over the decades is likely to tell you they've noticed it becoming more radicalized over the last thirty years... just like us. Meanwhile we're ineffective in solving our own problems and challenges, drifting ever further away from the founders principles by moneymen, corporations, the MIC and zealots.**

We spent massively on defense when we almost certainly didn't need to. Now as the real storm looms on the horizon, will we be able to print or borrow enough money to keep the bombs falling in an eventual *mega* war? Will bankers keep lending when the ponzi scheme has "timed out" and the lenders of last resort are our overseas rivals?

Will the religious wars we've fought prove to be *good practice*, or will they lead to our undoing? What if the *big one's* conventional and we're tooled for asymmetrical? And who's to say we won't

face conventional and asymmetrical wars simultaneously?

**As long as there's been a human race there's been war and it's likely to remain that way. As soon as we developed the capacity for abstract thought we realized we could take by force that which others would not readily surrender willingly.**

**As we grow weary of war and our treasury depletes, our adversaries and former adversaries of which there are many, flex their muscles bide their time and dream of revenge. These splendid little wars which we watch on TV may achieve the opposite of what the war mongers promised. When I think of how many times friends have said, "we just aren't killing enough of them", I feel a shiver down my spine. They explain, that's what war is all about and the quicker you get it over with the better but that doesn't justify killing on an industrial scale. The negative karma from rogue soldiers who committed atrocities, good soldiers who just *did their jobs* and the blood on our hands from weapons we gave to brutal dictators may come back and bite us like a hungry T-Rex.**

**The Russians and Chinese haven't fought major wars in decades, while we've kept in fighting trim with *splendid little wars* and police actions. We have a million experienced soldiers who are ready and willing, they have a hundred million who enthusiastically or not will die for the homeland. They also have different philosophies on war, including Sun Tzu's "Art of War" which General Giap used in Vietnam. Our police actions and wars are creating enemies and when the SHTF, we may have few reliable allies. We'd better maintain a powerful deterrent and pray we never need it.**



**There are dark ages and there's historical amnesia... so we really don't know what's coming next. We've learned that history repeats or something, but only those who trust the Bible seem confident in their knowledge of what lies ahead. Time will tell if it's correct, a stoker of ancient feuds, a general guide to the regularity of human violence or prophetic humbug...**

The WWII documentary ended with, “the most immoral thing the allies could have done, is not do everything possible to win the war.” The implication is that we also must do anything and everything to defeat our current enemies. Still we refuse to address root causes and we’re being conditioned to accept the use of nuclear weapons against those who don’t submit to our will.

With no legal basis and nary a qualm, the Romans, pillaged and plundered weaker tribes and nations ... little has change except now aggressive nations lobby the UN for approval!

The term “war games” is an indicator that those having so much fun playing have no intention of stopping... they might say they want to *go out of business* but in reality they wouldn’t think of it.

Is war a *mechanism*, by which humans reallocate resources and eliminate the excess male population? Nations usually have more testosterone charged young men than they can handle, many of whom can’t hold jobs or abide by society norms. Historically many become cannon fodder or a *burden to society*.

Tragically, responsible young men suffer the same fate, so the *time honored* tradition of war is anything but a perfect system. Instead of being rational combat is at best an outdated response to problems that could be solved in much better ways.

It seems the Republicans start most of our wars and the officer class is mostly Republicans but in all-out wars, the boots on the ground are more likely donkeys than elephants.

Everyone’s against needless killing to preserve freedom, the problem is we can’t agree what is needless and what isn’t.

**The same applies to less drastic measures such as wire taps, torture and big brother's latest surveillance methods.**

**As the population of the planet increases, so does the killing power of our weapons... is this some cosmic population control mechanism?**

**Sitting in the ruins eating each other, they'll still blame the other side instead of the war mongers on that got us into this mess.**

**Time magazine's cover touted Afghanistan as being "The Right War"...so, how many times have we heard that?**

**I'm told we're *noble* for solving other people's problems first but that's a hollow excuse for plundering the natural resources of others. If we truly want to be a shining beacon, we can do so by solving *our* problems and setting a positive example that will glow brighter than "bombs bursting in air."**

**Another Memorial Day has come and gone and the day after a brave soul interrupted the love fest. Yes, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to the soldiers who have died, but we also owe a huge apology to those who died in unnecessary wars, especially the conscripts who didn't join the fight because they wanted to.**

**If the US military is to engage in urban warfare, it should be in our own cities against the thousands of criminals belonging to the hundreds of gangs.**

**People who think that killing for a living is noble, should consider the consequences... in this life and beyond. Stop seeing humanity as an ant colony with; workers, soldiers kings and queens. Stop assuming that anything other than a king or queen is expendable cannon fodder.**



**What is the impact of war on our planet? There's everything from the carbon footprint of the war machines, , poisoned land, lead and “depleted” uranium, landmines, devastated families, crippled soldiers and murdered civilians... the list goes on and on.**

**War is almost always portrayed as dashing young men in handsome uniforms, acting like a heroic *band of brothers*. In other words it's usually glorified and as such will never go out of style.**

**My friends talk about bombing people as if what goes around does not come around. To some bombing's a one size fits all solution that will teach the infidels to respect and fear us... that may or may not be the case but it will certainly teach them to hate us.**

**"I think civilization is an agreement and once in a while you're going to run into people who didn't get the memo"...  
David Fincher**



## Conforming

"Every man is born an original, but sadly, most men die copies"... Abraham Lincoln

Funny how Abe's quote about originality has been copied by others who modify and claim it as their own!

When they said, "dream big, the skies the limit and think for yourself" it was malarkey. They really wanted you to live in a box... As far as they're concerned you're supposed to dream small, be a cog in a wheel and a brick in the wall! You're supposed to listen, believe what you're told, absorb "the truth" and not seek it yourself.

The people we know who seem to move effortlessly in different circles may not be doing it as effortlessly as we think. When the door is closed and the lights are out, they're as confused and frustrated as anyone.

Other than not mixing stripes and plaids I'm not too concerned about being perfectly matched be it clothes or décor... this saves time and money and I don't have to worry about standing out like a sore thumb.

"Do you want to live forever?" he asked me. If you don't want to be labeled a weird non-conformist the correct answer is "of course not." Heck, I'd live forever for the all you can eat buffets and of course there're better reasons than that. I don't think it's possible to begin with but in the future a person who takes good care might easily live to a be hundred.

"Don't let the noise of other's opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition"... Steve Jobs

## **Conspicuous consumption**

**“Technology’s in a race against depletion and depletion’s winning”... History Channel**

**It remains to be seen which of the above will win... but the universe surely offers the resources we need if we can get our mitts on them.**

**People talk about getting the most out of life, which seems to be buying expensive toys, partying and meddling in other people’s business. Despite all this about enjoying life, many are miserable and attempt to alleviate it with toys, drugs, alcohol and domination.**

**Americans are conspicuous consumers but also generous, reportedly giving money to those in need at the highest rate in the world!**

**Walking hand in hand with conspicuous consumption is planned obsolescence. The I-Phone you paid \$ 300 for was obsolete in a year so you bought the new one...in a few months they’ll be given away for free!**

**Madison Avenue’s job is to convince us we should buy more of what we don’t need but already have.**

**Throwing away an Apple because the outside’s a little bit brown is like demolishing a bridge with surface rust. In both cases, removing the top sliver reveals good stuff underneath.**

**American’s are able to conspicuously consume with the monopoly money the government so kindly provides. It’s one of the advantages of having the worlds reserve currency. We can use it to buy appreciating assets and benefit or junk and still loose.**

**We spend our lives learning, earning, consuming and finally liquidating what we've accumulated. Near the end, we tidy our affairs, ideally leaving our heirs an inheritance...in reality we often leave them a mess!**

**Years ago people were rarely photographed and a photo of that special someone was dear to one's heart. Now we take thousands of pictures and never view most of them. Heck who wants to see a blow by blow account of everything we do? A few photos recovered from a destroyed home are cherished as much as the thousands lost on the ruined hard drive. The thousand images we take might as well paper a bird cage, it's those simple few we'll cherish in the end. I think I'll delete all but one family photo... I'm just not sure who's family it'll be!**

## **Conspiracies**

**"There are times in life when one witnesses something so outside the scope of normal experience, that at first you don't see it" ... Captain Cook?**

**I don't believe in a grand conspiracy but think there are lots of little ones floating around. Even the so called *masters of the universe* are too diverse to agree on anything more than wanting to stay in power and as long as they throw us some scraps they can do with us as they please...**

**I tend to blame, the people that *control* the; banks, media and legal system for the current state of affairs but that's simplistic. They have less control than we think but more than they deserve!**

**Is it a conspiracy when brilliant people go to extraordinary lengths to accomplish remarkable things? I don't know, but**

they're usually opposed by equally exceptional people who're quite happy with the status quo.

Illuminati, Free Masons, Bilderbergers, Masons, Trilateral Commission, Council on Foreign Relations, Skull and Bones and Bohemian Club is a list of "Western" secret societies. I'm guessing there're similar groups in other parts of the world which may be even more secretive.

Whether its religion, politics, business or anything else no one in an influential position is unbiased. Don't take them at their word as they all have a financial, ideological or theological agenda or some combination thereof.

Perhaps secret societies exist because they have ideas that society generally won't permit... some are good, some are not.

So is it conspiracy, prophecy or just a very concerted effort and what came first the chicken or the egg? Is it people doing their darndest to make their preferred prophetic outcome happen or is it the hand of God?

If those with vast resources and an agenda make concerted efforts to acquire strategic assets then it's just another means to their end. Is this a conspiracy or God's invisible hand using people to fulfill prophecy?

The exact composition of TPB changes over time but the desire to re-engineer society to their advantage, or to what they think is to everyone's advantage is a constant.

There're people angry at the world because *it's treated them unfairly* and people angry because the world is unfair. The former feel they're entitled to special treatment and the latter want to change the world. The changes they want tend to be designed to help them and theirs... so what else is new?



**New York, NY 2012**

Americans seem convinced that the agenda of a small segment of the population is of utmost importance and that by joining in the helping achieve that groups goals, we will all be *blessed beneficiaries*. This is a far cry from what our founding father's wanted our foreign policy to be... but we're convinced that supporting these groups, we'll preserve our jobs, prosperity, lives and yes - our very souls!

Funny, the only conspiracies we believe in are the ones against us!

**While there are *at least* minor conspiracies from time to time, we're discouraged from using that word... unless we're referring people on the *bad guy* list. So put it this way everyone wants to get their way, including organized groups of people. Motivated assemblies of individuals network, agitate and lobby for their agenda. So call it what you will..."if it walks like a duck and talks like a duck" and all that.**

**"The world is governed by very different personages from what is imagined by those who are not behind the scenes"...Benjamin Disraeli**

## **Contractors**

Is the homeowner and contractor relationship... symbiotic, adversarial or parasitic? I think it runs the *gamut* and either party can fall anywhere on the curve.

The problem with advice from contractors is you don't know if they're saying what's best for you or best for them. If you separate the wheat from the shaft, contractors can be goldmines of information but that's unlikely to occur when you're employing them!

When I botch a repair my *excuse* is “I don’t do this for a living”...sadly the *pros* sometimes aren’t much better.

Contractors don’t like to admit making careless mistakes even though they do... it makes *business sense* to pin those little slip-ups on rookie assistants.

In addition to fixing leaks, plumbers and roofers create leaks and concrete guys break slabs...unfortunately the same applies to surgeons!

**Although we don’t always get along, when you get right down to it we’re all contractors of one kind or another.**

The point of diminishing returns is crucial to working people -- be it the contractor or anyone else. We figure out what we need to do to get paid and do no more than that. It seems that doing extra results in customers demanding even more!

**Thanks to the contractors clean up job, I know where to look for nails, the heating vent’s full of them... not to mention sawdust!**

**It took hours to tear out the floor and I’d love to show off my work but it would be for naught. My buddies are proud and anything I can do they can do better.**

## **Cooperation**

**“An organism at war with itself is doomed” ... Carl Sagan**

**The word *cooperation* brings to mind the word co-opted. The former’s usually positive the latter isn’t.**



**Both homogeneous and heterogeneous societies can be highly successful. In Japan where most people are ethnically similar and the system is competitive, people are generally prosperous. This isn't to say they're monolithic in thought but they do seem to agree on key issues and cooperate in general.**

**The U.S. is becoming more diverse all the time and I wonder how things will *work out* in the future. The demographic changes means politicians will have to keep making concessions to stay in office. Republicans in particular will have to change their approach unless they want to be blown out of the water by Democrats who seem to be a more natural fit for most of the new Americans.**

## **Crime**

**“We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.”... Aesop**

Some people are all about crime and punishment, if you don't do things their way it's a crime...

**Young men are too willing to become cannon fodder and young women are too easily victimized by violent criminals. This has been the case since time immemorial and may be case of hard wiring... it's time to find a new electrician!**

***Apparently* lots of men are turned on by fantasies about rape or at least some form of forcible sex. This unfortunate reality is probably due to our nature and partly to pornographic images most of us have been exposed to. It's bad enough when perversion occurs in our fantasies but when it results in actual crimes the perpetrator should be culled.**



**Banksters are smart but they're also corrupt and market manipulators, which is precisely why their hold over us should be broken. Do they really make their fortunes purely with brain power or does market manipulation and collusion have something to do with it?**

**When the Wall Streeters came to Congress for their handout did they take mass transit or fly corporate jets? Unlike the auto executives who were lambasted for that, there wasn't any criticism of the banksters for that. Not all Wall Streeters are crooks but the number of millionaires and billionaires among them brings to mind the saying, "behind every great fortune is a great crime."**

**I see the battle between Pennsylvania Ave. and Wall Street as a turf war between two crime syndicates. The criminals will reach *an understanding* to maintain their power and the American taxpayer will be killed in the crossfire.**

**Based on crime statistics, America is only the 85<sup>th</sup> most peaceful nation in the world... hmmm.**

**Vicious killers need to be *culled* from the human race... capital punishment though abhorrent if mis-applied should not be ruled out for the most vicious killers.**

**I have no problem with executing the insane and mentally handicapped if they commit murder... murderers need to be culled from the herd whether they understand the magnitude of their crime or not. This notion that someone should not be executed because he's unaware of his wrongdoing is pure madness.**

**Strangely, most westerners are against capital punishment but they are willing to consider nuking countries that refuse to submit to our way of thinking.**

Saw a part of an interview with Charles Manson and noticed that the name Manson consists of *man* and *son*. Turn it around and you get *son* and *man* which is similar to “Son of Man” which occurs many times in the New Testament. It makes me wonder if this wasn’t lost on Charley and if it had anything to do with his delusions of grandeur? What I really want to know is why was this SOB is given air time to begin with?

Maybe women are softer on violent crime because they worry their sons could do these things...in any case they’re wrong.

Whether on the street, airport customs line or savannah, making eye contact with the crook, cop or predator gets you nailed... don’t talk, just walk!

**The gangs running our prisons should be building a serious border fence. Afterwards those here illegally should be ushered across and our troops brought home to patrol it. Terrorists and the illegals won’t get in and the millions of able bodied welfare recipients can perform jobs *illegals* have been doing. Then our indigents might develop a work ethic and skills, instead of addictions and bad habits. The major threats to America emanate more from within our borders, than from beyond!**

**No single man should be judge, jury and executioner nor should we be the accomplice or enabler of a criminal. Society must fight with every means at its disposal to protect its citizens from those determined to prey on them.**

**“I’m just looking for clues at the scene of the crime”... Joe Walsh**

## **Criticism**

**“How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge?”... Proverbs 1:22**

**The proverb shows that some things never change!**

**The pundit acknowledged the accuracy of the remark that it helped Obama in the election to be “light skinned” ... “with no Negro dialect.” Of course only blacks can state this without a tidal wave of rebuke. Do Americans want honest discussions or just the right to be squeaky wheels on a PC wagon?**

**You can criticize Ben Franklin, because he can *take it* and can’t do much about it but don’t dare question messianic figures. Apparently they have no patience for questions, criticism or incredulity... nor do their followers. It makes me wonder about that hypothetical meeting between the whole bunch of them... who among them would be civilized and who would “go at it?”**

**I’ve done things right and done things wrong but never done things completely right. I’ve also never had a perfect day or a perfectly terrible day... unfortunately the latter may be inevitable.**

***Funny* how you can slander some people with immunity, while the slightest criticism of others results in serious consequences. In fact we go to war to protect certain ideas and to squelch others!**

**“Who are you to criticize the religion or government?” If it wasn’t for such criticism would we even have Christianity, America or freedom? Being *divine* Jesus had the right to criticize the dominant religion of his day, our founding**

fathers however were human and few argue that they should have kept their mouths shut.

I care what my friends think about my patriotism and theology and value their opinion. I don't expect them to be any happier with me than I am with them when it comes to these things and the best scenario is that when we disagree we do so peaceably.

Can you be critical of something without opposing it? Can I be pro-Palestinian without being anti-Jewish? Can I be a critic the church and not be anti-Christian? I say yes but that doesn't dampen the consequences of saying unpopular things.

“Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary. It full fills the same function as pain in the human body. It calls attention to an unhealthy state of things”... Winston Churchill

## Cults

“The only difference between a cult and a religion is the amount of real estate they own”... Frank Zappa

Frank may have been overstating things but if you hang around long enough and buy enough buildings you too can become a denomination...until then you're a cult.

Lots of people join cults but few ever leave and return to *normal society*. They've invested too much and the *loss of face* they may experience if they had to admit they'd erred or been duped is too much for most of them to bear, it's easier to find solace within the cult and hope that someday they'll rule the world.



**Cult members have a tough time quitting because doing so might be seen as an admission they were duped. Without some face saving mechanism few are willing to face that embarrassment! Instead they stay in the community that validates their world view and rejects the larger one. There are also very few people who'll admit they've faked something or have been caught up in some form of mass hysteria. The fact that most people think they're wack jobs makes them embrace and retreat to the "security" of the cult even more.**

**I'm not trying to *call out* or insult anyone... just encouraging people to use their amazing brains to think, research and analyze instead of rotely memorizing and automatically**



accepting what they're taught. What's wrong with aggressively dissecting controversial scriptures instead of endlessly discussing the minutia but never allowing yourself to question its veracity? The former may produce real spiritual breakthroughs, the latter leads to replays of debates that end with an *authority figure* warning that its blasphemy to think outside of what he considers *God's box*.

You say cult is too strong a word and quite wrong, but I've heard pastors twist, hide and tamper with evidence too many times to believe their stories are the gospel truth and this has been going on forever.

There are conspiracies and there are cult-spiracies. They overlap and compete for power and influence. They can be secular or religious but one thing in common is their belief in exclusive righteousness.

The several dominant world religions are similar in that they have lost the baggage of being considered personality cults... despite the profound similarities. Loyal members are careful not to allow their minds to be polluted by reading anything that conflicts with the "official story"... after all they have all the information they need and it's completely true!

North Koreans carrying on after Kim Jong Il's death hysterically shouting praises and trying to one up each other reminds me of religious services I've attended. The difference I see is that the hysteria's voluntary at the religious services but obligatory in North Korea. In both cases people are whipped into frenzies by charismatic leaders but in church its voluntary while in Kim's case the passion seems as real as a three dollar bill.

After hearing today's *message*, I think that so much of organized religion is based on fear tactics and frightening people into joining the team. There is so much fear of going



to hell that people gladly accept teachings they would otherwise result in spirited debate. Major religions have all the earmarks of cults but having been around so long, they've shaken that label and managed to replace the cults that dominated before their *ascension*.

The cults disagree on a lot of things but one thing they have in common is that you can't afford to have mixed feelings. When it comes to their theology you're damned if you don't agree, which should be ratted out as a sketchy sales pitch. Instead the pretense has worked for thousands of years and's likely to work for perpetuity.

As a species we want to belong to a close knit group and cults are exactly that. It's not just religions that appeal to that desire, teams, gangs and political parties share those characteristics as well.

Everyone I know is a cult member...including me, though I'm not sure to which I belong.

Though far from stupid, cult members refuse to listen to anything not expressly approved for their consumption making them ignorant by choice.

Arguably, the major religions started at personality cults and under the direction of their charismatic founders, or those who *inherited* the cult after the founders *departure*, eventually became main stream and replaced "outdated" religions. The world is still the ultimate Oyster, so cults continue to battle for the hearts, minds and money of mankind. Whether Christianity or any other religion prevails and wins the grand prize, or eventually becomes outdated and withers away remains to be seen.

The last thing I want to do is offend God but I also don't want to be a stooge for any cult claiming to be his sole representative. You say that means I'm lost or damned but I'll still take archaeology, history and comparative religion over jumping on the band wagons as they roll past like the Easter parade. The religiously indoctrinated people I see have been promised salvation but so many of them seem angry, hooked on antidepressants and intent on our conquering the world in the name of their *brand*.

In order to be found *acceptable* by the cult, you have to be indoctrinated with their ideas and accept them. Prior to that, your brain needs to be *washed*, so that they'll have a clean slate to *work with*. That so many very different cults are successful at convincing their members to "self-indoctrinate" supports the theory that we all possess a "God shaped hole" that needs filling... the *rub* is how many God shaped plugs there are out there.

It's implied that I should be ashamed of and renounce my Egyptian roots if I want to be a "true" American. Well I'm no more ashamed of it than I am of my European roots... we're all just folks and I celebrate all the people from whence I came. I'm told that anyone can rise to the top as long as he embraces the cult of American exceptionalism and tosses his non-American roots in the scrap heap. So yes Virginia it's true, according to some people anything not American is "un-American."

Most people are peripheral or half-hearted members of one cult or another. Some of the major ones are; patriotism, religion, environmentalism and science. We're peripheral members because only a small percentage are full blown wacko members but if push comes to shove the percentages skyrocket!

**“I exploit you, still you love me... I tell you one and one makes three ...I'm the cult of personality...neon lights, Nobel prize...only you can set you free” - Living Color**

## **Debt**

**“The one aim of these financiers is world control by the creation of inextinguishable debts”... Henry Ford**

**The "debt state" allows the government to borrow or print unlimited amounts of money, enslave half the nation via debt and make war on whoever it wants to. The cost of the wars is passed on to future generations who supposedly will "benefit" from them. It's a wickedly effective way to force everyone to buy stock in their wars... even the unborn!**

**We're told it's not just a matter of national security but also a matter of saving jobs and the economy. The congressman says that if Wikileaks reveals secrets about a major US bank, the entire economy will go down the tubes and take everyone with it. This sounds strangely familiar...like what they told us before they bailed the banks out to the tune of a trillion dollars. This may be true but it doesn't sound like the America I used to know and the situation will worsen if we don't extract ourselves from the clutches of our slave masters. If America's survival has become so tied to bank profits, then Jefferson, Jackson and the others who warned us about the dangers of banksterism were right all along.**

**They say be grateful for the credit/debt system because it's allowed us to prosper, but how do they know that? Who's to say we wouldn't have done just as well under a financial system tied less to credit. We have lots of material goods but we can't take them with us, or even enjoy them since we're so busy paying for them! Whether we'd falter or flourish under a system of hard money is largely conjecture. One thing's for**

**sure... I have more confidence in honest hard working people than in this system which is rigged to benefit the rich.**

Those victimized by predatory lenders might want to stop paying and tell the banksters to take a hike. Don't worry they'll be back knocking on your door with credit offers before you know it... albeit at even higher interest rates! Their job is to extend credit and enslave the unwary. Adding injury to insult the banksters pass their losses on to hard-working people in the form of even more usurious interest rates... and taxpayer funded bailouts!

**It might be good to revive the Biblical tradition of the Jubilee, where financial debts and most sins were forgiven every seven years. Predatory lenders would get their comeuppance and minor non-violent offenders would be freed from overcrowded prisons!**

**“Before borrowing money from a friend, decide *which* of them you need most”...American Proverb**

## **Democracy**

“Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch” ... unknown

**Democratic power is driven by demographics and money...which is a scary thought when you're low on both!**

**It doesn't matter who's "in power" as long as they allow everyone their God-given rights. I don't care if the government's a “pure” democracy or not as long as it protects and treats all citizens equally. Democracy has been around since ancient Greece only occasionally living up to its potential and sometimes proving no better than despots.**

In theory a democracy with checks and balances is ideal but in practice the majority lords over minorities and special interest groups almost always prevail. Politicians are beholden to the majority to the detriment of minorities and to the rich at the expense of the middle class.

Regarding the injustices of the past and our inability to learn from our mistakes, two wrongs don't make a right and our leaders are just pandering to the latest *power blocks*.

In modern democracies, the government has more power than kings ever had. Although not quite as *concentrated*, there's still an elite class that's every bit as powerful as the king and his court. They don't have the *right* to draw and quarter you but cross the well-connected and they'll still lock you up and throw away the keys!

I hope our democracy thrives, but care more for preservation of God given constitutional rights than for principles like “one man, one vote.” If votes are used to deny people's rights then what good are elections?

Just as a society can be too totalitarian it can also be too democratic. If every bum stead gets a full vote the eventual result is an unsustainable welfare state...

**“Women ruling men may be unnatural, un-Biblical and un-Constitutional but it's not undemocratic” ...he said, inserting foot in mouth and walking towards the doghouse.**

**The senator said, “it isn't not our job to second guess the president”... some would say that's exactly what the senator's job is!**

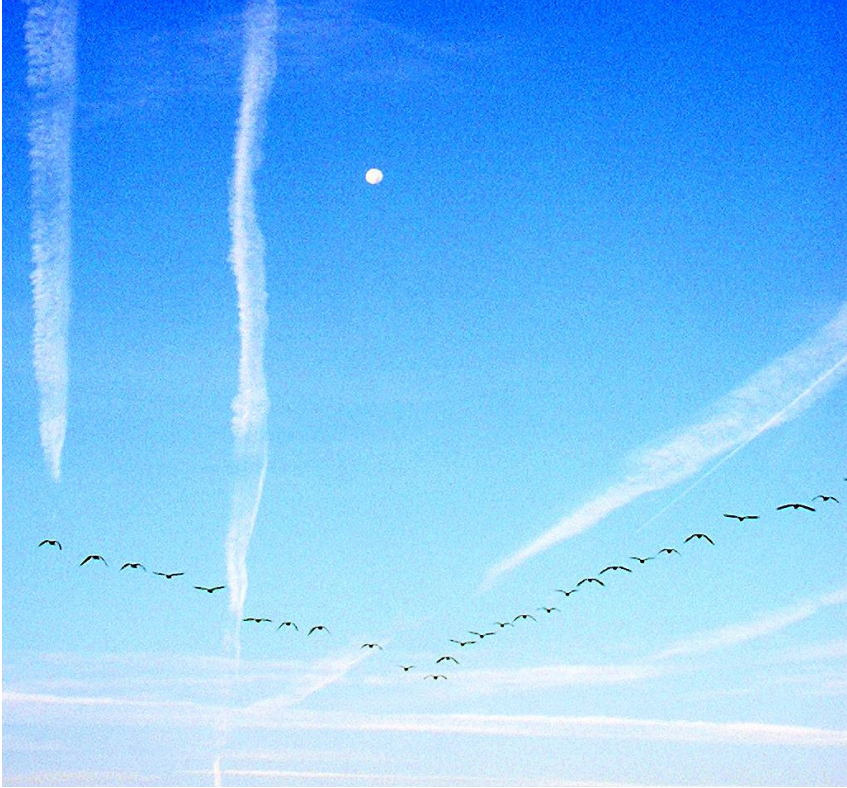
Some of the *greatest* democracies have been established concurrent with oppression of minorities. In our case, Africans and Native Americans were enslaved or exterminated while we extolled ourselves for recognizing the *inalienable rights of man*. Two things that encourage the formation of democracies are *common enemies* and a homogeneous population. As long as the majority agrees on key issues, such as manifest destiny or being chosen over others, you have the makings of a *fine* democracy!

Democratic principles are great when justly applied in a fair and balanced way. If however, the democratic process is controlled by corporate advertising, military-industrialists, or other special interests, many people don't benefit. Likewise when the democracy's controlled by a majority at the expense of the minority, a large numbers of people don't benefit. A majority vote can be valid for many issues but when it comes to individual rights, democracy is too often a tool to squash the individual.

**There seems to be no form of governance that works even remotely perfectly. A democracy may do better on the average but even a dictatorship can *work* if said dictator has the interests of the people at heart. Jesus is supposed to come back and rule with a rod of iron, which sounds like a dictatorship to me and certainly he wouldn't be indebted to special interest groups. No matter what kind of human contrived government we have, the leadership seems mostly interested in making things "better"... but better for whom?**

The "majority" has never ruled justly, never will and rarely even plans to. For that matter, neither does minority rule - look at Saddam Hussein, the Hutus, Tutsis etc.

**"The most powerful person in the world is the man who counts the votes"... Stalin**



**Brownsburg, Indiana**

### **Denominations**

**“Here’s a truck stop instead of St. Peters”... R.E.M.**

**How many times can you split a hair? They say *Christians aren’t better, just better off* and each denomination thinks it’s *better off* than the rest.**

**Mormonism is seen as a cult by some Christian denominations and its origins make me wonder if it will ever achieve full acceptance. That notwithstanding, I think we need more competition when it comes to religion but the leading denominations hate to lose market share.**

I think being unevenly yoked is fine and in some ways better than being evenly yoked. Spouses who believe the same things are likely to be less tolerant of others since there're no *checks and balances* in their home. That being said, there probably is a greater failure rate among couples who're "unevenly yoked" especially if they're unwilling to tolerate the other's views... which seems to be what most religions want.

My friend said he's the liberal branch of a conservative church, which makes me the conservative branch of a liberal church... but there's still a gulf between us.

In money *denomination* refers to a bill's value and in religion each denomination considers itself a hundred dollar bill.

The different denominations occupy various market niches like; feel good messages, fire and brimstone, prosperity doctrine, extreme exclusivity etc. The mega-churches tend towards a careful mix of the above, old mainline denominations have declined supposedly due to their liberalism and those that preach exclusivity and have *extra special* rules for salvation are also growing at a fast clip. Some people like red meat, others are vegetarians when it comes to the "word" and there's always a church willing to give them *what they crave*.

When members decide their brethren aren't holy enough, or acting *holier than thou* schisms occur. When families or cliques control churches making it impossible for others to share the glory, schisms also occur. Doctrinal disagreements also lead to members seeking a new church or starting their own.



I've been asked, "are you saved, born again and a Christian?" And I wonder does it really matter or are these questions primarily recruitment tools? One denomination says you're saved if you do "A", another says you have to do "B" and a third says if you don't do "C" you're going to hell. What's the difference and what's the use other than scaring, dividing and claiming to know who's worth a hoot and who isn't?

It gets confusing sorting through each denominations *essentials list* and their wish list. One says don't expect salvation if you drink whiskey, but wine's okay, another say's don't drink at all and a third says any form of alcohol's okay. The path to salvation is narrow, winding and resembles Swiss Cheese!

What's worse... joining a religion cause you're scared or not joining cause you're stubborn?

We're encouraged to attend church but if we can't find one we like and entertain the notion of starting a new one we're branded grandiose or worse. Even if you don't claim divine inspiration you're called a heretic and advised that there're perfectly good churches out told to should join one:)

I respect people's right to self-indoctrination, and realize it is the dominant paradigm but despair at people's lack of confidence in the brain God gave them. I guess it shouldn't be such a surprise...after all we've been taught that an inquiring mind is a curse.

Religious brands are like Coke, Pepsi, Miller and Bud... but no matter what the flavor, don't drink the Kool-Aid till you've observed its effects.



## Diversity?

### **“Demography is Destiny”...Auguste Comte**

**We’re living in an age of “prescribed or “engineered diversity” which goes along with political correctness. Is it because social engineers are manipulating us or is Madison Avenue just “giving the people what they want.” I just hope it isn’t a case of them working together to achieve an elitist utopian point of view... of course they’d never do that! :)**

**I am for diversity but not for it as prescribed by think tanks or other brilliant minds. Instead people should be free to define diversity for themselves. European settlers to America created a more diverse gene pool than that of the countries the emigrated from and with each new generation we’ve become even more diverse. That’s fine but immigration is now mostly from countries with eon long traditions of corruption and human degradation. It’s assumed they will**

come here and almost universally become freedom loving people but I think that's calculated *disinformation*. It's just as likely that most will embrace our system when it's to their benefit and also move America in the direction from whence they came.

That wouldn't be entirely different than other groups of immigrants, but we're Ostriches if we think they won't change America at least as much as it changes them... just look at the benefits they're consuming and the crimes their committing. Oops I did it again...

Just heard from a friend about an immigrant who paid a bribe to get a driver's license instead of taking the California test. If this is the norm then some will assimilate and others won't. They'll pass such practices which are endemic elsewhere in the world to people who previously wouldn't consider them and the net result will be detrimental to the nation as a whole.

The Europeans who settled America came from traditions like Magna Carta, Common Law and other ideas that sprang forth during periods of enlightenment. Those flooding our shores and overwhelming our borders come from traditions of tyranny, corruption and bloody feuds. Sure they're fleeing those evils but I don't share the optimism that they'll abandon them, especially when so many come to exploit the American system via anchor babies, welfare fraud etc.

*Outdated* ideas and the people that fostered them will be pushed into corners, or forced to *adapt*. The choices may be cooptation, resistance or emigration. Resistance may be futile, emigration a possibility and cooptation likeliest for many who will take the path of least resistance.

Every ethnic group on earth is great... to have survived this far into human history they had to be! Some populations take their survival dead serious while others have been *conditioned* not to. In fact they've been taught that anything other than passivity and enabling others to scramble ahead of them is an egregious wrong. I've no problem with people feeling that way but the possibility we're being manipulated into believing that bothers me. What's good for the goose is good for the gander and if populations "A" and "B" have the right to agitate for greater success then populations "C" and "D" should too.

This may be the only time in history that a population has voluntarily financed their own replacement by another population. Is it the meek inheriting the earth, the first being last, manipulation of the masses, or just a bunch of people who've been programmed into believing they should have guilty consciences or that giving away the farm will result in a heavenly reward?

Isn't it nice that PhDs in ivory towers have decided others deserve the fruit of your labor more than you?

I'm not saying this group or that has a right to exist because of contributions they might make to humanity. Instead they have the right to exist because they're human beings. Unlike some, I don't extend such respect to rats and mice... the great whales - maybe.

We're taught that human populations don't vary in any character and physical traits but it's okay to note that definite differences occur within our own ethnic group. Among whites there're obvious bell curves for intelligence, strength, temper, speed and other traits. You might *get away with* saying these bell curves vary slightly for different ethnicities but if you suggest the differences are anything

more than *meaningless statistical chatter* get ready for a visit from the PC police!

I wish everyone the best but don't want "my people" replaced by a "your people", vice versa for that matter. Some populations have disappeared over the ages supplanted by others and few lament those that are gone. I hope the human race remains diverse and believe mixed race people are every bit as good as anyone else but still hope we don't eventually blend into one new *super* population. If we want a diverse society we should consider promoting ethnic diversity, instead of lobbying for everyone to look and act as much alike as possible. True diversity means different populations living in peace and harmony, or even living apart if they so desire.

Maybe they're called *races* because of the evolutionary rat race to survive.

There should be a sense of balance between being forced to associate or do business with anyone and being able to benefit from the experiences you've had over the years. Not everyone of a particular *population* is the same but if you've experienced negative results consistently what's wrong with being wary? It's great to consider everyone individually but foolish to ignore past experiences but that's what politically correctness mandates.

Be it ever so humble, *there's no line like thine...* so what's wrong with wanting it to thrive?

There's compensation and there's over compensation... reparations fall into the second category but I would be the payee, not the recipient, so what do you expect me to say?

The sociologist said skinheads are basically young people who've fallen through the cracks. Apparently that's what you are if you don't agree with the current *group think* on diversity.

But don't worry, they'll throw you a rope but if you don't change your tune, they'll cut it and through the crack you'll go! They're nice enough to offer you a chance to conform but fail to *advance* to their way of thinking and you'll be expendable.

"Planet of the Apes" was wrong, Chimps aren't nicer than Gorillas... but they may have portrayed Orangutans correctly!

I agree with MLK that people should not "be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character," That's if we're going to judge each other at all, which admit it or not everyone does. What I don't like is being; steered, coerced or cajoled into embracing things someone else has chosen for me. When TV shows must have characters only from particular minorities, it indicates social engineering via the media is going on.

The *squeaky wheel* is getting its way while more numerous minorities remain silent because so many are here *illegally*. If the latest election is any indication, they're on the verge of achieving their goals and will soon demand their sitcom rights as well!

I don't think for a minute that I belong to a superior race but I'm happier being around people who I tend to *look and act like*. And what *pray tell* is wrong with wanting one's people to remain distinct, instead of extinct?

Did you know there's a list of "threatened peoples?" These are somewhat distinct small populations that are in danger of being *diversified* out of existence. In most cases, they consist of thousands to hundreds of thousands of individuals... the Yakuts of Siberia are one example.



**I don't think one blood line can taint another but do think they be *overwhelming*. Mixed race children are perfect but tend to be more like one parent than the other. Since the genetic input is equal from each parent you say I'm a racist but like Groucho said, "who're you going to believe, me or your own eyes?"**

**A report said more than 70% of Haitian women in earthquake refugee camps have been raped and that more**

than 50% of Haitian women overall have been raped. Certain African countries also have extremely high rape rates but if you analyze or *God forbid* draw anything but PC conclusions from the data you're called a hater and a racist. If there's nothing to hide, why are some people committed to suppressing data and discouraging debate? Heck most whites admit that serial killers and mass murderers are usually white, it's a stain on them but they rarely deny it.

As far as preconceived ideas about the abilities of different ethnic groups, much of the conventional wisdom is being proven wrong. Chinese athletes are increasingly winning gold medals and blacks are excelling at everything from astrophysics to brain surgery. I think this proves that education and nurture is extremely important but I'm still not ready to discard all my *antiquated notions*.

Arguably, whites may be the least "human" of homo-sapiens, because scientists now say Caucasians have Neanderthal genes. That brings up other uncomfortable questions? For example can it be determined that one race or another's DNA profile is closer to apes? Increasingly it's speculated that depending on where your people primarily originate, your DNA profile may contain traces of; Neanderthals, Peking man, Chimpanzee etc.

Do Ethiopians have Semite blood and is there validity to the Bible's claims about the nations that arose out of Noah's lineage. Why don't we talk about these things and attempt to authenticate and learn, or debunk and learn... what's the big deal? We're so saddled with academic PC and ethnic sensitivities that rigorous investigations into these subjects are taboo. The ethnic sensitivities are somewhat understandable but if the truth came out it might draw people closer together, so those who find this field interesting should pursue their research and those standing in the way should kindly move aside.



So, you want a child with blonde hair and blue eyes, or black hair and brown eyes? No matter who you are, the “required” chromosomes are probably lurking somewhere in your DNA... for better or worse, in the future, designer babies will be a reality.

I’m just trying to make a case for my people, just as others make a case for theirs. Instead of receiving encouragement and grants I’m tarred, feathered and risk being rode out of town on a rail. Some people are so interested in being on the *popular kids* band wagon they’d gladly extinct the blood line their ancestors struggled to bless them with.

You insist there’s nothing subjective about it... your rights supersedes someone else’s desires, because theirs are only *desires*, while yours are *rights*. The question as I see it is what is a right? Do you have an inalienable right to anything other than life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, or do you won an election mean you have legitimate dibs on the fruits of another person’s labor?

I want diversity too, but not the diversity you are foisting on us... let each diversify according to the dictates of their conscience, not yours. Of course you won’t allow that, because you are determined to engineer the human race per your vision and the heck with anyone else who’s not on your team.

I think I can like people of any race or ethnicity without supporting their “agenda.” Activists disagree and imply that if I’m not for their agenda, I must be against *their people*. Meanwhile members of my own *group*, say I shouldn’t have friends from “rival” ethnicities. It seems that if you cooperate, you’re accused of being co-opted, but remaining independent is even more difficult!

On some level, women look for men who are different from themselves in order to strengthen their genetic diversity. Men however are looking for women who are somewhat like them, in order to preserve the *integrity* of their blood line and parent a new generation that looks and acts like them.

As the keepers of the blood line, men find stranger's children less adorable than women do. Women are more likely than men to adopt every child that comes along... men do this too but at a lower rate than women and in rare cases the man, like the bear will eat the young, especially someone else's. Dastardly and preposterous you say...I agree but I'm basing it on what men do, not what they *say*.

Why should someone be compelled, coerced or taxed to assist another race to rise above their own? Why should a sovereign individual (if only there was such a thing) have to assist others to replace his or her bloodline?

I am not ashamed of my heritage and respect yours but will do what I can to ensure that our genes remain in the pool. Apparently such an attitude is okay for some to express, but racist and hateful for others to espouse and that double standard's nuts if you ask me! We've had certain notions drummed into our heads since childhood and one is that only *oppressed* minorities have *the right* to proclaim their desire to "be fruitful and multiply." So called *dominant peoples* would be derided as greedy and hateful for stating the same. Instead they're supposed to step aside and let others *have their turn*. Everyone should be able to have their turn but it shouldn't be government policy or at the tax payer's expense.

The government should not be engineering society in a particular direction vis-à-vis the demographic makeup of the country... nor should we be bullied by squeaky wheels who threaten violence or expensive court battles if they don't receive the special treatment they demand.

DNA is more than chemicals, just as words are more than just letters. The chemicals in our DNA are your bloodline's words and they spell out a unique and precious signature for each of us!

They call it racism and say it's most often a learned behavior *passing* down from parent to child. Sure *racial preference* can be learned but there are other reasons that people acquire a racial preference... assault and battery is one thing that comes to mind.



There is one species of man called *Homo sapiens* but there are several races. The social engineers however would have you believe that, “there is only one race, the human race.” This is an example of the *Newspeak* that Orwell warned us about which has taken root and now frames our discussions...there are actually different races and it shouldn't be a sin to say so.

**Explosive population growth is a weapon sometimes used by one group against another. It's called benign by those employing it to gain power and if it's done peacefully maybe it is... unless they're using OPM to advance their agenda. In any case those who are being replaced are foolish or *incredibly generous* to be financing their own ruin!**

**Yours are an exceptional people be ye; Aryan, Jewish, African or whatever... regardless of that you have no right to rule anyone but yourselves!**

**If you make a stand they hate you, if you acquiesce they despise you... in any case there are intent on; replacing, usurping and conquest one step at a time.**

**For years I've heard our DNA is 99% similar to a chimps, now they say it's 94% the same as a pigs.... that's interesting but the *fun fact* is that it 50% the same as a banana's!**

**Neanderthals larynx's were located higher in the throat than those of modern humans, reportedly rendering them unable to produce the complex sounds that homo sapiens can make. I wonder if the position of the larynx varies among modern human populations and if so in what manner.**

**They say we're all related and came out of Africa originally, but Europeans are descended from Cro Magnons who emigrated from the middle east. Modern European and their American cousins may be 95% Cro Magnon and 5% Neanderthal. Far from being ashamed of being called one, I'm fine with being a "bit of a Neanderthal."**

**Cro Magnons and Neanderthals reportedly overlapped by at least 10,000 years in Europe and the Middle East, with Cro Magnons the ultimate victors in that chapter of pre-history. A similar thing is happening now, although it's between human races instead of between human species. Races are**

interbreeding at a higher rate than ever before, now that cultural and natural boundaries have lessened... the result is that the face of humanity is changing forever.

Maybe like doctors, we should try to extinct ourselves... if this world is but a nasty prelude to an eternity of bliss for the saved, shouldn't we do everything possible to be saved and die childless. With that logic we'd be doing our descendants a favor if we made sure they were never born? To me it's obvious that that is wrong and they should have a chance to be born and have a *turn at bat*. The more enlightened way is to have as many children as you want and can support and let them decide for themselves what they want to make of their lives.

It's best to help everyone, but what's wrong with focusing on helping your own people, or people you relate to? Arguably when helping the least among us, we do the most good but helping anyone, anytime is a great thing to do. The point is, we shouldn't be forced to spend our money helping whoever the government has determined *needs* our help the most, instead we should be able to decide for ourselves where to direct our charity.

“Society blind by color why hold down one to raise another, discrimination now on both sides seeds of hate blossom further”... Creed

### Dogs (Mans Beast Friend!)

“Acquiring a dog may be the only opportunity a human ever has to choose a relative” ... Mordecai Johnson

My weasel of a dog has done it again and he'll go down as our only dog to get caught in a mouse trap! Just a glue trap, 89

**but there he was traipsing around the garage trapped like a rat. If it was secured to the floor he'd have been stuck till liberated. This is the same dog that crawled into a sweatshirt sleeve and needed rescuing from the predicament.**

**You never realize how good your old dog was till you get a new one that's worthless! Okay maybe there're no worthless dogs in the greater scheme of things but I've had some real *biscuit eaters*.**

**Need to realize that when I'm talking to my dog, I'm mostly talking to myself. Once we get beyond the 20 or so words that means "something" to him, I'm just pissing in the wind. "Car wash Odie? The car's getting a bath, do you want one too?" He just gives me that look that means "I don't understand a word you said!"**

**My dog's on a hunger strike... he's protesting years of Purina Dog Chow, even though it's often spiced with choice table scraps. So do I wait him out or capitulate to his demands?**

**Dogs and cats don't understand much of what we say but dogs at least act interested. Did you know human yawns are contagious to dogs but not to cats!**

**I used to be a dog lover but this one's cured me. He can act so human, he's such a butt hole... but the kids love him!**

**You know the garbage is stinky, when you take it out even the dog give a disapproving snort.**

**Odie sniffed the envelope from Korea and snorted approvingly... he knew it had been mailed by our daughter!**



### **Indianapolis, Indiana**

**Dogs are okay, some more so than others but they're almost always easier to live with than people. Mine doesn't care about anything but his tummy... filling and rubbing it are his top priorities.**

**I'm watching the dog show and thinking, "I'd like one of those and one of those", thinking this breed, or that would surely be an improvement over my current dog. Eventually sanity prevails and I realize that whether its dogs or people, the devil you knows' usually better than the one you don't. What looks like greener pastures' has its own *history* of problems.**

**I've heard of worthless watch dogs but I'm pretty sure mine's on Facebook giving burglars inside information... he's definitely out to get me!**

A nice thing about dogs' is they can't call on the phone and talk your ear off. They seem content to hang around and listen to us but I do wonder what they'd have to say...

Ever notice that dogs can't *curb their enthusiasm*? People and cats are pretty good at hiding their emotions, but canines have no control!

The dog engaged in recreational barking every night and all attempts to dissuade her failed, until we confined her to the garage with her dog friend. She could no longer see the rabbits, and as long as she had company was quiet and content. Prior to this, I'd tried anti-bark collars and a ultrasonic birdhouse, but she'd outwitted the high tech solutions.

Ever notice "working" dogs ears standup, while hounds and hunters hang down... what's that all about?

If nothing else, our dogs provide an extra pair of eyes and ears - not to mention an incredible nose and decent company. Unfortunately they're not low maintenance... ours are veritable pains in the neck!

Our dogs pay attention but understand only a fraction of what we say. That's what happens when most of your brain's devoted to scent recognition.

Dogs are furry robots and thanks to the "Pavlov" effect the can be *programmed* but they're also independent little creatures full of personality. They remind me of R2-D2 and C-3 PO... our Boston Terriers even walked like robots.

My wife alluded to the word euthanasia the other day and then I said it. We were only joked since she's too humane



**and I don't want to admit defeat. It would be a failure to put her to sleep, so we'll probably put up with her for another 0 years...**

**The dogs follow me around as I do my chores... they don't have it great or bad... they have dog's lives and compared to most, theirs aren't too bad.**

**Big dogs eat little cats, big cats eat big dogs...can't remember where I heard that.**

**Even my dogs are self-centered... when they lick me their goal's to get me to scratch them... but licking's not the best way to ask!**

**My dog's life is based on hunches, he hears car keys and follows me to the door hoping for a ride. He hears various noises in the kitchen and trots in hoping for a snack. Everything's based on a hunch, but he's wrong much of the time, if his life depended on these hunches, he'd have been dead a long time ago. If he was a betting man, he'd be flat broke. His hunches aren't baseless but the information he has to work with is limited... rattling keys, which shoes I put on... it's an imperfect system.**

**In addition to being like robots, dogs are keen students of human behavior. Mine observes us and makes deductions about the chances for snacks, car rides and walks. He's right about half the time, which isn't bad but explains why they don't rule the world.**

**"If your dog doesn't like someone, you probably shouldn't either"... unknown.**

## Dreamland

**"The best cure for insomnia is to get a lot of sleep"... W.C. Fields**

**There's asleep, awake and there's firing on all cylinders, which for me means coffee.**

**What is this *sleep* thingie you keep talking about?**

**"You've got your hopes and you pocket your dreams, you trade them all to avoid an unpleasant scene"... Billy Squier**

**"Our brains use dreams like dress rehearsals"... David Randall**

**In addition to everything I want being illegal, immoral, or socially unacceptable...even my dreams are impossible!**

**Sleeping five hours a night gives me an extra day per week of awake time. Unfortunately those days come off the end of your life, so I'll die ten years earlier... not to mention I waste those *extra* hours watching TV.**

**"For all that I've blessed and all that I've wronged in dreams till my death I will wander on"...Audio Slave**

**I believe in individual sovereignty and wonder if it will always be just a pipe dream?**

**I wish someone would give me some advice on how to get a good night's sleep, cause I sure haven't figured it out!**

**"I'm living in the forest of my dream, I know the night is not as it would seem"... Laura Branigan**



**World Trade Center Tower One, Jan. 2012**

**If you learn to budget money, hang with motivated people and party moderately, you may achieve your dreams. If you surround yourself with addicts and idiots, you're likely to**

achieve nothing. You may even be able save some misguided friends by example... just don't let *them* lead you astray.

My sports career has always been better in dreams than reality... in so many sports I was the greatest!

“Standing on a hill in a mountain of dreams telling myself it's not as hard, hard, hard as it seems”... Led Zeppelin

### Driving

“Until you've learned to drive, you've never really learned how to swear”...Robert Paul

For most people commuting is a pain or a time to listen to the radio but for race car driver wanna-be's it's a good time to show off their amazing skills...

Then there're people who turn their blinker on *after the fact*... oops I did it again.

The Escalade blazes past illuminated by flat screens and electronics. They're enjoying the fruits of their labor like we did twenty years ago when we had a TV/VCR bungied to a stool so our kids could watch Snow White or Dick Tracy. How will it be in another twenty years? Surely today's technology be outdated... or will it be like they say in Arabia, “grandfather rode a camel, I drive a Mercedes, my grandson will ride a camel.” If they're right we might be driving horse drawn buggies!

Is the guy in the electric *more responsible* than the guy in the hybrid, who's *more responsible* than the guy in the compact, who's *more responsible* than the guy in the pickup who's never hauled anything? Probably not and most people don't act superior based on their car anyway right... hmmm.

**I'd rather look at a piece of wood than a luxury car but it's got to be a very nice piece of wood and I don't mind nice cars either.**

**Funny how a new Mercedes looks a lot more like a new Hyundai than like an old Mercedes. The car makers copy off each other like it's going out of style... which is exactly what they're doing.**

**We've been putzing behind what appeared to be a police car and when it finally exits and we speed up everyone realizes it was just the fire chief. We could have been driving 80... whoever that was driving behind the chief failed us!**

**My wife looked out the window and noted, "that truck has double wheels." It was the first time she ever looked closely at a semi... but *no matter*, there's lot of things she knows that I've no idea about.**

**I'm rushing to pick up the weights I saw on Craigs List and get pulled over for speeding. Now, instead of costing me half of what they'd cost at Walmart, they cost me ten times more... guess I'm the dumb bell!**

**Have you ever approached an intersection and thought, "if that car makes it so will I"... of course you have!**

**Our fellow drivers can be tough and unforgiving... after all, they've got places to go and things to do. When you do things right they barely notice, but screw up and they really let you know about it! Weak drivers are picked on by people who when outside of their protective steel shells are weaker still. It's a case of the meek inheriting the road, especially if they have more horses, bells and whistles.**

Gender, your car and whether or not you look scary are all factors in the highway hierarchy, with scariness being the trump card. Few people want to deal with a maniac on their way to work, as the law of the jungle applies to the highway too!

With fuel prices again spiking, drivers of big SUV are changing their habits. They're becoming more aggressive and taking foolish chances. I suppose they have to hustle more than usual to come up with the cash to fill their tanks, even as the status of their rides diminish. If you're hauling a family these tanks may be necessary but if you're driving one to feel better about yourself, you might consider another form of validation.

Why do I say, "jack ass!" so often to people driving the same way I do? (Don't answer that!)

When a jerk's behind you let him pass... after all would you rather him harass your behind, or watch him disappear over the horizon? Heck you might get lucky and see him get pulled over for speeding.

Being from Jersey people would laugh and say "what exit are you from" but we didn't live close to a highway... ironically now that I live in Indiana we do.

I'm surprised there's a cop lying in ambush because it's Sunday morning... but he's the forgiving sort and though we're speeding lets us slide.

The police are lions and we're Zebras but unlike the Serengeti where the slow perish, here it's the quick who're *dead*. On the road like on the savannah it pays to blend in and standing out from the crowd gets you nailed. What we need are invisibility shields which I hear their working on...

We “rubber neck” when a cop pulls someone over... likewise the zebra watches as the lioness bring down its mate. In both cases the lesson’s forgotten and we quickly return to our careless ways... I wonder if the zebra knows that someday it will be him on the lions plate?

The speed of the new gas pump caught me by surprise... it took a minute to fill my tank and drain my wallet. If we’re going to be charged an arm and a leg for gas, let’s go back to slow pumps so at least we’ll feel like we’re getting our money’s worth!

When you’re hauling something fragile it’s good to anticipate the bumps and even better to hire a *local*.

“When you come to a fork in the road take it”... Yogi Berra

## **Drugs and Alcohol**

“First the man takes a drink then the drink takes the man”...  
Proverb

**Sobriety’s not half as bad as it’s cracked up to be... nor is it a perfect state of mind.**

If I’d never smoked pot what would I be, a doctor, lawyer, Indian chief? Maybe I’m fooling myself but I think I’d be better off had I never met Mary Jane. I’d have been a bit more driven and wish I knew where I’d have driven to.

I quit smoking pot *long ago* but people want to know *exactly* how long. For some ten years is enough for others twenty isn’t and I’m tainted for life. That’s their privilege just as it’s mine to be wary of adults who’ve never touched it. They’re not as noble as they think and in my opinion tend to be even more judgmental than those of us who’ve *fallen*.

**Having quit pot long ago and cut down on drinking I'm now used to being in my "right mind" and you know what... it's alright! Despite what you've heard, even Marijuana's a cruel master and other drugs even worse but ask an addict if he'd like to be sober and he might say no. Don't believe him... he has a vested interest in proving he's right and the rest of the world's wrong.**





**If friends will only accept you if you get wasted, you might want to ask yourself if they're really friends. Substance abuse is a contagious disease and if they keep breathing on you, you'll catch it too!**

**Any possible benefits from pot would have occurred that first year when it *may* have helped you realize there's lots of BS in the world. After that it became a hindrance, health hazard and monkey on your back. You feed him a hundred bucks a week and all he does is whisper "let's get high." If you want a pet get a dog, it may be a pain too but at least it'll stay off your back.**

**Addicts have a disease and drugs make use of them to spread germs . The more charming the drug makes the addict, the more effective a vector he'll be and the more victims he'll claim.**

**"It's my life and I'll do as I please" isn't that bad a philosophy as long as it's not an excuse but most of the time it is.**

I can' t particularly begrudge my Viking friends for their hard drinking lifestyle. Since first leaving the *land of the ice and snow* a thousand years ago they' ve conquered everything in their path. With their flagons of mead, horned helmets and battle axes they' ve spread their culture far and wide. Arab writers encountered them trading, conquering and settling in modern day Russia where they were called the "Rus." Those who settled in France and later conquered England were called Normans (Norsemen) and our own shores were landed on prior to Columbus by Leif Erikson and our later colonization was dominated by the English and

Germans both of which had Viking blood and shared their ancestors love of strong drink.

**You can't smoke pot regularly and fire on all cylinders, I've been around enough stoners including myself to know that. This despite the claims of smokers who're fooling no one but themselves... if that.**

**It's not unusual to need a crisis or catalyst to quit a bad habit. It could be chest pains or becoming a parent that finally gets you to pay attention. Take advantage of these moments because you'll need all the help you can get!**

**People who haven't kicked the habit may not admit they'd be better off if they did. If you really want the truth, talk to someone who's quit.**

**For a thousand year you could drink and not worry about crashing your car and killing innocent people... the worst you could do was fall in a ditch. That's not to say that drunks haven't been beating their wives and children since time immemorial and that's reason enough to be moderate or abstain.**

**On the plus side there's having fun, being "charming" and making occasional witty remarks. On the other side there's; heartburn, heartache and stupidity.**

**Why do so many Christians say it's wrong to drink? The Bible says Jesus changed water into wine and the banquet master said it was even better than the wine they'd just drunk. In the aforementioned passage (John 2:9-10) it's called 'wine' (oinos) and 'good wine' (kalon oinon) which are the same words used for fermented wine elsewhere in the New Testament. So the argument that Jesus turned water into non-alcoholic wine is flimsy. Jesus also served wine to102**

**his disciples at the last supper so once again the teetotalers argument holds no water...**

**Some say Jesus changed the water into wine because there was no clean water, but couldn't he have just purified it if he wanted to? We know wine loosens the tongue, which in moderation helps the shy to socialize but when taken too far our tongue can stab us in the back. Matthew 11:19 says, "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners"', so again the teetotalers' argument for abstaining totally is spurious, at least per these scriptures.**

**Many agree that less is better, but over time the body requires more drugs or alcohol to get a buzz. So adding insult to injury, the substance not only makes it hard to quit, it also makes you want more and more!**

**With so many people using drugs and alcohol, we're approaching the point where being on drugs is the norm and being "sober" is the altered state! We now catch fish with caffeine, hormones and other drugs in their bodies. What about us? Are we ingesting Prozac or Zoloft in our drinking water? If not we eventually might? Is that why the doctor says drink plenty of water?**

**If there's anything useful to be learned from smoking pot it's realizing you may not need a new truck, TV or condo on the beach to be happy. It's not good to lose motivation but it's good to realize that life shouldn't revolve around "stuff."**

**One person doesn't drink for religious reasons, the other for earthly ones. They have little else in common and disrespect each other's beliefs aside from the issue of drugs and alcohol. Both would go back to prohibition if they could... and both would probably benefit from a glass of wine or a joint!**

**Out of curiosity... is it considered drinking alone if your dog's in the room? What about if you offer Rover a little nip... heck some will take it!**

Toasts are fun and shots are even more fun but they're also more dangerous. Toasts can get out of hand, while shots are intended to get out of hand.

Rough drafts of the Declaration of Independence were reportedly written on hemp paper and they say that by law Washington and Jefferson had to grow the weed. King George needed hemp to rig his ships, which were built with some of the finest lumber in North America... but that's another story.

I'm listening to the old songs and though I haven't smoked for years still enjoy them. I'm still mov'n and a groov'n to them though admittedly not as wildly as before.

Saw a show on TV that suggests the prophets used drugs... hmmm, is that blasphemy or might that explain a few things? For now I'll file that theory with UFOs visiting the prophets... pure conjecture but not blasphemy in my book.

"Addiction starts out as fun, progresses to fun with problems and ends us as nothing but problems"... do the math, the clock's ticking.

If you *choose* addiction over education don't expect society to bail you out and don't be surprised if you have a measly standard of living... and if you say no one warned you, you're only fooling yourself.

**"Put away the crap before the crack puts you away. You need to be there when your baby's old enough to relate"... Smash Mouth**



## Economics

**“The economy depends about as much on economists as the weather does on weather forecasters”... Jean-Paul Kauffmann**

**Not to mention economists are even less accurate than weathermen!**

**It’s not just ideologues who think they’re right and the other side’s wrong... we’re all like that. So what came first,**

democracy as a reaction to tyranny or socialism as a reaction to crony capitalism and the rich getting richer? What both sides have in common is assigning blame to the other side and refusal to accept any responsibility for the mess.

Forget the CPI, GDP, VIX and focus on the O.J. indicator instead. For him to be so desperate as to steal his own sports memorabilia from a dealer, his stocks must have been

underperforming. Or, look at the number of dandelions on your street, holes in your socks or how many people are sneaking across the border, these are real economic indicators!

The people *solving* the debt crisis are old and those who'll pay for the "fix" are young. These old problem solvers may be doing their best but their agendas and constituents get in the way. It's the time honored tradition of old folks making the laws and young folks enforcing and suffering under them.

Warren B. said there's a resilience to the American economic system and I agree but that system's changed quite a bit recently. Those changes include huge welfare and other social program and dangerous (yes I said dangerous) demographic shifts which don't bode well for the country... but I'm not supposed to say that.

Just heard that the interest rate for pay day loans can be 348% per year. If that doesn't tell you something about our financial system you're not paying attention!

You say you want austerity but its not so easy... if you reduce welfare they'll be riots and if you downsize the military thousands of direct and indirect jobs will be lost. Not to mention we won't be able to *police the world* as well, a job many love and think is of the utmost importance.

**“A nickel ain't worth a dime anymore”... Yogi Berra**

Unfortunately most of the high paying jobs being created are still related to financial shenanigans or the MIC. There's increasing demand for doctors and nurses but other than that to get a “decent job” students are pursuing degrees in finance and engineering.

Finance majors create algorithms and strategies to enrich the rich and many of our engineers help “keep us safe” by building bombs that blow people up even *better*.

The talk show host calls the Occupy Wall Street vermin and advises young people to get jobs in finance and munitions. The government agrees and may *come to the rescue* by finding new wars for new grads, but they'll have to find a doosie if they expect to employ the millions out of work. Otherwise the protests may threaten the nation with a slow, painful dismantling of the status quo.

Protests rarely work however since the uber rich have an ace up their sleeve... its said they can always pay half the poor to kill the other half. But even that strategy has its limits and eventually those who pull the strings may run out of willing accomplices and have to face the music... and the song won't be Happy Days are Here Again!

Falling knives, dead cats bounces, outliers, **green shoots, animal spirits**, claw backs, low hanging fruit, ankle biter acquisitions... what colorful language the Wall Street pirates use!

The word depression is being bandied about. Is the credit crunch and market meltdown for real or is Wall Street black mailing Main Street? Are we so dependent on financiers that our entire economy will collapse if they don't extend credit to us?

**Should we face our financial Armageddon now or kowtow to Wall Street and remain debt slaves forever? Most of us haven't the stomach or the resources to break the chains and tell the bankers to get lost.**

**Even that may be immaterial since the financiers own the very media that informs us how**

**bad things will get if we don't play ball. They mostly tell us it's impossible and un-American to do anything other than follow the path of debt slavery.**

**Washington Mutual which supposedly had assets of 300 billion was sold to J.P. Morgan for about 2 billion... isn't that's less than one cent on the dollar? I don't know anyone who's bought anything at such bargain-basement prices...but J.P. did!**

**Slow motion train wreck or death by a thousand cuts... either way an economic collapse can take a long time. There's still hope it can be reversed but is anybody really trying?**

**We've taken the president's words to heart and spend every dollar we make trying to support the economy... meanwhile we're falling behind no matter how fast we run.**

**The Dow Jones industrial average may be a good "wealth meter" for the rich but it's a unreliable indicator of what's happening to the rest of us... this despite the much touted trickle-down effect they're so fond of pointing to.**

**Economists tell us the market always "sorts things out" but all I see is the rich getting richer. When capitalism becomes too laissez faire, manipulators and robber barrons win, not those who work hard and smart.**



**“The president never saw a dollar he didn’t want to spend twice”... Peter Morici**



**Wall Street, New York, NY**

## Education

“I have never let my schooling interfere with my education”...  
Mark Twain

**If you have a degree people give you a pass, if you don't you're subjected to scrutiny. Opinions from someone with an advanced degree are more likely to be taken seriously than those made by other's... like it or not that's *life in the big city*.**

**Knowledge is power but education's as interested in mind control and indoctrination as it is with knowledge.**

**Don't worry about being “the guy” who's in his twenties and living at home while going to school. In a couple years he'll be independent and the hecklers will be that much closer to moving in with their parents... for good. Today's lesson is - don't hitch your star to an idiot's wagon no matter how much they BS you.**

**“It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it”...Aristotle**

## Elites

**“Why should a member of the ruling class question the ruling class? Because no reform ever came from the bottom”...  
Gore Vidal**

**I'm not sure Vidal's right because some times change does come from the bottom. Problem is they usually resulted in little more than new gangsters running the show.**

**Our handlers are wonderfully effective at herding us like cattle. Maybe it's ordained that a ruling class should determine how we live and if we continue to submit that's**

how it will always be. Of course we occasionally question authority but usually within *acceptable* bounds. We've been so well *educated* we dare not challenge the *really important things* they've taught us.

An example of how people can be *kept in line* was the Tiananmen Square massacre. Instead of using local troops who might hesitate to fire on their countrymen, troops were brought in from the hinterlands and they had no qualms about shooting the demonstrators to which they had no ties. I wouldn't put it above another government to do the same ...

Speaking of elites... is an *adjunct* professor someone that adds junk? And why during congressional hearings do they have to put signs in front of the expert witnesses referring to them as "The Honorable Timothy Geithner" etc. I guess without the signs we wouldn't realize just how *honorable* these people really are.

The movie "Social Network" was a good example of the elite forces competing to dominating America. The brilliant young Zuckerberg rising from obscurity versus the Winklevoss twins who born with silver spoons in their mouths. I don't know who I dislike more but since I know none of these *princes* I shouldn't be so judgmental. I wonder what if anything these high achievers would think of me?

When people are born free and equal a nation can be all it is meant to be. When some are born rich and other's born miserably poor, opportunity alone may be insufficient for the tide to lift all ships. Without suggesting confiscating fortunes

**I see nothing wrong with progressively taxing the super-rich. If however it's spent perpetuating the welfare state then nothing positive can be accomplished.**

**Whether its bugs or people a class structure helps maintain the status quo and at the top of it all *Alphas* control society. Meanwhile Betas and Deltas tolerate the system as long as there's *something in it* for them.**

**“The real truth of the matter is, as you and I know, that a large financial element in the large centers has owned the government ever since the days of Andrew Jackson”...Franklin Delano Roosevelt**



Empire State Building from 600 Third Avenue

## **End of Days**

**“That’s great it starts with an earthquake... it’s the end of the world as we know it and I feel fine”...REM**

Our descendants may see us as quaint, unsophisticated, relying on crude technology and for the most part holding ridiculously antiquated ideas. That’s unless we steer ourselves into another dark age in which case they’ll look back at us as technologically advanced but morally bankrupt.

**As OWS protesters worried about pepper spray and Egyptian demonstrators worried about being shot or run over by Mubarak’s camel corps I wrestled over decisions like, do I use Walmart butter or the good stuff on my pancakes? Meanwhile the tide of history sweeps across the world...and I wonder when will it reach our shores?**

**There’ve always been wars and rumors of wars, not to mention earthquakes and tsunamis but that doesn’t rule out the possibility that we really are approaching the end. Two things that are frequently mentioned are the re-establishment of the state of Israel and preaching the gospel throughout the world. According to the Bible these are major signs that the end is near and they’re now coming to pass...hmmm.**

**The “kicker” is that many prophecies of the Bible reportedly have come true and others seem on the verge of being fulfilled. If they do, does it mean the Bible’s true, or does it mean there’s been thousands of years of concerted effort by brilliant people to make those prophecies come true? I don’t know if it’s sour grapes to suspect the later scenario but I don’t rule it out.**

**If the end of the world plays out according to the Book of Revelation does that mean the *good book* truly prophesized God’s plan. If it happens exactly as written I think it proves**

**the Bible is true. If it deviates more than a little it could mean that a 2,000 grudge match has played out, based largely on a feud over prime real estate!**

**If this is the *end of the world as we know it* who will get the credit for predicting it? Will it be the Bible or the Mayans? Most side with the Bible, so unless something extraordinary happens exactly on December 21, 2012 the Bible will get the credit.**

**So are prophecies truly written in stone and unchangeable or are they warnings that if heeded can be the salvation of humanity instead of just foretelling our demise?**

**Sometimes *the establishment* really does have to *come to an end* because tyrants don't go away voluntarily!**

**Forget about being a vegan, carnivore or omnivore... when the SHTF we'll be eating from the can... opportunivores is what the survivors will be.**

**The government asked the scientists who created the airborne bird flu virus H5N1 to keep certain details out of scientific journals. Their new bug has a 60% mortality rate, which combined with its ability to pass between humans in the air could make it worse than; smallpox, plague or anthrax... way to go Mr. Scientist!**

**Was the Holocaust prophesied in the Bible? Does the Bible code record it? If not how could such a huge tragedy have been overlooked?**

**Valuable SHTF trade goods might include; reading glasses, Viagra, seeds, coffee, tea, Viagra, ammo, armor, antibiotics, morning after pills, water purifiers, Viagra, potassium iodide, batteries, paper, beans, rice, salt, sugar, cooking oil, tooth**

brushes, Viagra, floss, toothpaste, fire starters/extinguishers, alcohol and viagra... but not necessarily in that order.

We've always been on the "eve of destruction", if it wasn't lions and tigers and bears, it was Neanderthal's, Huns and barbarians. Somehow it feels different this time, like maybe the ultimate cow pie really *is* getting ready to hit the fan.

None of us were here *last time* so it's hard to imagine how they know it's different this time, but many *preppers* are still placing their bet on the year 2012. The last *big date* was 2000 and before that the year 1000 was pretty scary but these were just dates and not based on "signs." Apparently there've been numerous end of the world scares but the sun's always risen the next day. But were there the same signs and conditions we have today and is man's paranoia about December 21, 2012 any different? Time will tell and it's only a few days away...

In addition to the Mayans, preppers point to the prophecies of Nostradamus, the Hopi Indians, Chinese mystics and others as indicating a huge catastrophe in the near future. All I can say is hope for the best, prepare for the worst and make peace with God according to your beliefs.

Funny, my friend and I are preparing differently for the much anticipated end of the world. She prayed for the holy spirit while I bought guns and ammo. She doesn't want to be around for the tribulation while I, foolishly perhaps hope for the best and plan for the worst.

So where does Nostradamus fit into this? He was of Jewish blood like the prophets of the Bible but his family had converted to Christianity. Do his prophecies allow for more than one outcome and are his writings more along the lines of warnings? One thing for sure, he gets lots of press!

"The future ain't what it used to be". - Yogi Berra



## Environment

**“Don't blow it - good planets are hard to find”...  
Time Magazine**

**It's believed that Easter islanders felled their trees for rollers to move massive stone heads around the island. Eventually they destroyed the ecosystem leading to starvation and supposedly cannibalism. Our desire to drive gas guzzlers won't lead to that but we our consumption patterns could result in dire consequences down the road.**

**To say the climate is too big for humans to impact ignores what we've done to other massive components of the ecosystem... like the land and the sea.**

**We need to drill a bit more and develop our energy resources but without oversight and regulation the energy companies will revert to their robber baron roots. BP's applauded for paying generous claims but without government prodding they , would have stuck it to us royally!**

**Some believe in exploiting the earth's resources and some believe in being fruitful and multiplying. I agree with the later if they can support their children and the former if they also believe in husbanding the earth. Unfortunately many of the most irresponsible people out there are fruitful and multiplying with OPM. Willfully or ignorantly they would have the rest of society pay for the education, healthcare, food and energy of their brood. Conversely, many hard working, responsible people have bought into the ZPG story and will be the last generation of their families. The same liars selling that malarkey have convinced them to pay the bills of those intent on replacing them.**



The TV show was on the environmental collapse of the USA and it seemed strange to me that the sponsor was Exxon...

According to some pundits, it's too late for America to have a soft landing as far as weaning ourselves off fossil fuels. According to others, we have enough fossil fuel to last a thousand years. Man-made climate change is often disputed by conservatives and they may be right or it may be a *fait accompli* that we've crossed the Rubicon. If that's the case we should plan accordingly, like gearing up to rotate crops so that we plant the ones that will grow best in the changing environment. Meanwhile Germany obtains 20% of its electricity from renewable energy sources and we obtain but 2%. Colorado is the U.S. champ obtaining an average of 17% of its power from wind and on breezy days over 25%!



Subway - New York, NY

Environmental regulations cost some jobs and create others but without them and despite what they tell us, most corporations would have few qualms about turning the USA

**into a polluted wasteland... after all they owe their stock holders a good ROI!**

**When I think about global climate change the first thing that pops into my head after initially thinking yes it's occurring, is "what does so and so think about it?" The point being that I'm influenced by peer pressure, strong personalities and loud opinions. Instead of standing my ground I go along like a sheeple in order to maintain my pitiful place in the pecking order☹**

**Some people are so busy being nice to cows and trees they've no time left to be nice to people... this may explain why some environmentalists are rude.**

**I wonder if there were conservationist cave men? Probably so since they supposedly worshipped animals. I'm guessing they were in the minority and then like today, most people were conspicuous consumers. After all you don't see many Woolly Mammoths running around... As far as Tigers, Pandas, Whales and the current crop of endangered species, I hope we can protect them better than our ancestors protected the species they *helped* to go extinct.**

**The survival rate for endangered species depends largely on where a species lives and the government's attitude towards it. The Chinese like Pandas so they have a good chance, Tigers may only survive in zoos and ranches where they're raised for body parts. Barbaric as that is, at least enough of their DNA might be preserved to eventually release them into the wild if there's any wild left.**

**"Do unto those downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you".... Wendell Barry**

## **Experience**

“Experience is what causes a person to make new mistakes instead of old ones”... Unknown

See lightning seek shelter... you needn't get fried if you're willing to learning from others.

As you go about your day do things consciously and you'll have better results. You'll trip less, knock fewer things over and be more productive than when you're dumb and on autopilot... so do things consciously.

The experience of trying to sell *water softeners* was a rough one! My friend became discouraged and tried to get his grass cutting job back. All I could think was... at least he's learned something!

**“Learn all you can from the mistakes of others. You won't have time to make them all yourself”... Alfred Sheinwold**

## **Faith**

**“Woe to him who believes in nothing”...Victor Hugo**

**There's faith in God which is wonderful and there's faith in leaders which leads to acceptance of their directives and ignorance of their faults. Given half a chance they act like war lords and Mafiosi.**

**“For we walk by faith, not by sight”...2 Corinthians 5:7.  
That's pretty cool but substituting what others tell you for what you see has pitfalls as well.**

**If you have hope for an afterlife of some kind it helps to have faith in God. Worldwide there's considerable debate about**

whether or not your faith must be in Jesus or in the God of the Bible but most who hope for eternal life agree it helps to have faith in God.

I agree, you have greater faith in Jesus than me but I don't see that as meaning your faith in the God of all creation is more than mine. The God of all creation may or may not be the same as the God of the Bible but dare I say the good book may portray him through a biased lens.

Martin Luther King said, "faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase." That's fine... my beef's with *blind faith* which can result in falling down those stairs. When you're in the dark blind faith is fine but when the sun's shining follow the light.

Faith is swallowing a horse pill after eating peanut butter!

There no place for that much touted virtue called *diversity* when it comes to faith and most religions do their best to convince us that they're the *true one*. If someone wanted their race or nationality to rule the world they'd be rode out of town on a rail but it's still fashionable to declare one's religion the gospel truth and all the others blasphemy.

The church says Jesus must have risen from the dead, or else "our faith is dead." I've heard that many times but still ask why can't ones *faith* be first in God? It's wonderful to have an intercessor *available* in Jesus but there are people who believe in God but don't accept the Nicene creed? Your *warnings* about damnation for not believing your "truth" are frightening but that doesn't prevent me from believing foremost in the God of creation.

The tenets of the Nicene Creed which is very similar to the Apostles Creed may or may not be true and the same goes for miracles of the Bible. My question is - if they're true what is

the mechanism, is it God with a capital “G”, god with a small “g” as in aliens, some other mechanism or are they generally untrue? The church would rather us not ask these questions and call those who questions unbelievers, atheists or when they’re trying to be nicer say we’re “intellectualizing” the Bible. We’re simply trying to satisfy normal inquisitive minds and if the Bible is what it claims to be, it should be able to withstand a little scrutiny without its proponents becoming our inquisitors.

I agree with those who call the Bible the greatest book ever written but I’m no more convinced that it’s; entirely of God, the truth, whole truth and nothing but the truth than I’m convinced that Jesus is the God of all creation. I’ve been warned repeatedly about the consequences of being wrong but like many others can’t ignore rationality or fully embrace religions whose inalienable “truths” fly in the face of basic knowledge.

Walking on water and raising the dead arguably could be accomplished by a God with a capital “G” or a god with a small “g” as in ancient astronaut theory. The evidence for these miracles or the grander ones like creating the world in seven days is so thin that one must rely on blind faith. Many if not most people are willing to do that, especially if the penalty for not doing so is eternal damnation. I hope someday more people will pull their heads out of the sand and have the courage to question the clerics.

“Tell people there is an invisible man in the sky who created the universe, and the vast majority will believe you. Tell them the paint is wet, and they will touch it to be sure”... George Carlin

**I think more people would question the invisible man in the sky version of the world except for the trump card that anyone who does will burn in hell...**



**NY Stock Exchange Jan. 2012**

## Family and Relatives

**“Guests like fish begin to smell bad after three days”... Ben Franklin**

**When I suspected my brother didn’t want to return calls I was perturbed but eventually realized it’s okay with me if he prefers communicating via e-mail... actually its quite convenient.**

As parents get older you find words like *worrisome* and *disturbing* are an ever increasing part of your vocabulary. The true is, I’m not that far behind them.

Regarding your latest argument please cool off before broaching that subject again or maybe don’t touch it at all. You sure can make each other angry but don’t forget you’ve also made each other very happy!

**You might lead loved ones to water but it’s up to them to drink. Not that we’re so smart but when they’re craving the *material* what they may really need may be immaterial. When they complain that no one *supports* them, give them a place to sleep and a meal. If they have squandered “everything” don’t be manipulated into enabling them or following them down that path. Tell them it’s never too late to change and with a little luck the message just might sink in.**

**You’ve worked like a mule and when led to water you drank. Others refused to labor and in their *hour of need* plead for you to carry their load. Be my guest but don’t expect to be appreciated, repaid or most importantly for it to do any good...the right thing is for them carry their own load.**

**Did I mention my wife, daughter and I live in parallel universes? We are *almost* polar opposites when it comes to**

preferences priorities and interests... Sonny and I are a little more in sync but far from alike! In high school my daughter left a trail of nail polish bottles and hair ties everywhere. Now when she visits it's a trail of shiny things that fall from her clothes and hair... it's nice but she leaves too soon for me to follow them to their source.

### **Fecal Matters**

**“A good shit is the most underrated pleasure in the world”...  
Lyndon Johnson**

**It's even better when followed by a successful flush! One of the worst things that happens in the bathroom is failure to send the load on its merry way!**

**I take it for granted a double flush will be required when I go at my house but occasionally it requires a triple. This due to our antiquated low flow toilets... they're a joke and end up wasting water.**

**I'm remembering an old TV commercial about STDs, in which a pile of underwear grows larger and larger as the narrator advises us that unprotected sex with one person, is like having sex with everyone that person's been with. When I shake hands with ten people is it like shaking hands with everyone they've had an *unprotected* shake with?**

**If I need to “go”, the Grand Hyatt at 42nd and Lexington is the place! Clean, unlocked, hassle free and no one asking for a tip!**

**A dog licking its butt is a bit like guys who like to smell their own farts... the dog's taking things further but he has a better excuse!**



If you think about it, intestines are like sausage making machines except they pinch nasties...

Why is it that everything I enjoy is rude, crude, socially unacceptable or gives me heartburn?

Sure a close shave looks good but many people are more impressed by that than by a man's character. It reminds me of the local radio host who likes calling OWS vermin and dirty hippies. Despite wearing his religion on his sleeve he acts like he's never read Matthew 23:25.

The word *colonization* implies the *visitor* intends to stay, since the act of depositing the colon's *fillings* on the new land means he plans to stay a while.

The real test of which hand's dominant is which one holds the paper? Which reminds me, even kings have been known to get their hands "dirty."

They say our ancestors used softened corn cobs and later the Sears catalog... yikes!

Our low flow toilets require a double flush... so where's the savings? The same goes for towel dispensers and faucets in commercial establishments. The other day at Wal-Mart I could only get water from the farthest faucet. This after playing tag with the soap dispenser which would only turn on when I move my hands away! On the other hand, they've finally made a decent hand dryer... it's the Xcelerator and it puts the old Berkeley's to shame!



**Occupy Wall Street, Jan. 2012**

**I think the Ginza sushi chef's secret *ingredient* was dirty hands... that's why I've stopped going to there. Having diarrhea afterwards was the tip off, at our new favorite sushi bar, that doesn't happen.**

**Men wipe in one direction, women in the other...both are correct based on their anatomy.**

**Not that it's as bad as a heart condition but have you ever had a blocked fartery?**

## **Feelings**

**“Feelings are like chemicals, the more you analyze them the worse they smell”...Charles Kingsley**

**Okay so it was impossible to find a good quote for this chapter!**

**Funny how feelings comes after “fecal matters” but I guess that’s better than “Food and Drink” following it.**

**If you can feel something in your gut, why can’t you can feel things in your bones? That feeling in your gut’s immediate but what you feel in your bones is deeper and even more profound.**

**If you’re going to trust gut feelings, it’s better to trust yours than someone else’s. If you are going to rely on someone else’s gut feelings, be sure to take a good look at their record. Are they on the ball or do they just like giving orders and advice?**

**It’s fine to react based on gut feelings in emergencies. If it isn’t a crisis, use your gut as a starting point, then analyze and qualify.**

**“First feelings are always the most natural”... Louis XIV**

## **Food and Drank**

**“I’ll take a good hot dog over a bad hamburger any day”... Andy Griffith (as Ben Matlock)**

**I'm drinking \$ 35 a bottle of juice which claims to do miracles so why do I need vice grips to open it? Heads should roll at**

**Monavie's bottling department... how do they expect old people open these?**

**How many nigiri lunches, wedge salads, bread pudding and Guinness Stouts can one consume? There must be more to life than eating and drinking... although those are undoubtedly some of life's great pleasures!**

**Not only is eating less meat and processed foods, healthier, it also lowers the cost of meals, allowing us to spend more on natural foods. We might even lose weight and reduce our carbon footprint! Of course spreading this message is futile especially with the endless commercials telling us to super-size!**

**Kettle chips or sesame sticks is a tough choice but I'm determined to find out which is better. The only way's a taste test and I'm enjoying putting them in my mouth a lot more than the inches I'm putting on my waist. As far as the test they both passed with flying colors!**

**They tell you not to store onions and potatoes together or they'll go bad, but they sure cook up nicely together...**

**The rich have the option to eat at a leisurely pace, their minions don't... at least not when the boss is watching.**

**We've all "cut the cheese" but who's been cut *by* the cheese? While scraping hardened cheese off a spoon it cut me and lodged under my nail...ouch! Low and behold a month later I suffered another cheese cut, this time while disguising the dog's pill in a piece of old cheddar... I give up!**

**Some people have accidents with knives but my specialty's burning myself on the stove. It usually involves trying to outguess the hot element indicator... I still haven't learned my lesson.**

**It's hard to eat a peanut when there's a cashew next to I and that my dear is why I *ruin* mixed nuts. *Not* picking the cashews is like eating broccoli instead of the pizza on your plate. It's funny though, chocolate's the great equalizer...it makes peanuts as good as cashews or any nut.**

**They tell you to chew 30 times before swallowing your food if you want to lose weight. Another way of saying it, is chew your food until it's released its flavor. When we wolf down our food, we eat too much, miss out on the flavor and get indigestion. So take your time, eat good things and enjoy your food!**

**When in the candy aisle, tell yourself it's it poison not candy! (Unfortunately this doesn't work for me☺)**

**I find ways to get around my diet not because I'm so smart but because I'm dumb.**

**On one channel "Sea Shepherd" harasses the Japanese Minke whalers, while on another Inuit's kill Bowheads and butcher them on the ice. Maybe some whales are special, and deserve protection... but what about cows? Hindus worship them but you don't see them blocking the drive thru at McD's. Why does Greenpeace think they have the right to decide what people can or can't eat? Why aren't they harassing the Inuit whale hunters? I think it's because that wouldn't be politically correct...**

**Sea Shepherd's in Scandinavia harassing whalers and the teaser for the show says, "the only way they'll stop us is to sink us" and I wonder if the Icelanders will remember their Viking roots and fight? Activists have decided people shouldn't eat whales and I wonder if and when they'll get around to cows? Will they make lions lay with lambs and**

convince fleas to leave their dogs in peace? Will they spare rats and mosquitos because they are God's creatures too?

Why don't they demand that Africans stop eating Chimps or Koreans stop eating dogs? Cows are sacred one place, whales another and what about pork? Americans and Asians like it while Muslims and Jews don't. They've yet to go after hot dogs and hamburgers but those are also on their list. Who are they to tell people what to eat unless it's an endangered species? Maybe whales are *superior* to cows but I hear that pigs are highly intelligent too... so why not save them?

If a whale species is endangered then I agree with them but if a whale is harvested sustainably they should mind their own business. The fact that western whalers are the ones that almost hunted whales to extinction is relevant and makes it our responsibility to help manage them responsibly, but not to demand that others stop hunting the sustainable whale species. And finally, are all whales equal? Those living to be thirty may be like cows, while those living to 90 may be "special" and deserve more protection. I don't know the answer to that question but the rainbow warriors *do*.

The Chinese buffet advertises in Spanish... now that's smart! Is it okay for me to note the large number of Hispanics there. Funny, I don't think the opposite applies... but that's may also be un-PC to say.

Seems the only way I'm going to lose weight is to eat like a Fruit Bat and with the holidays approaching that's not going to happen!

Certain items become invisible in the fridge and soy sauce is one of them... I look right at it but never see it... what's with that?

**Some cereal companies design their boxes to close and keep the product fresh, others design theirs to do the opposite. Poorly designed inner bags rip when you try to open them and the cereal quickly becomes stale... they want it to so we'll buy more! These along with coffee packages that self-destruct never cease to amaze me.**

**If you want to get in shape eat better food... and less of it!**

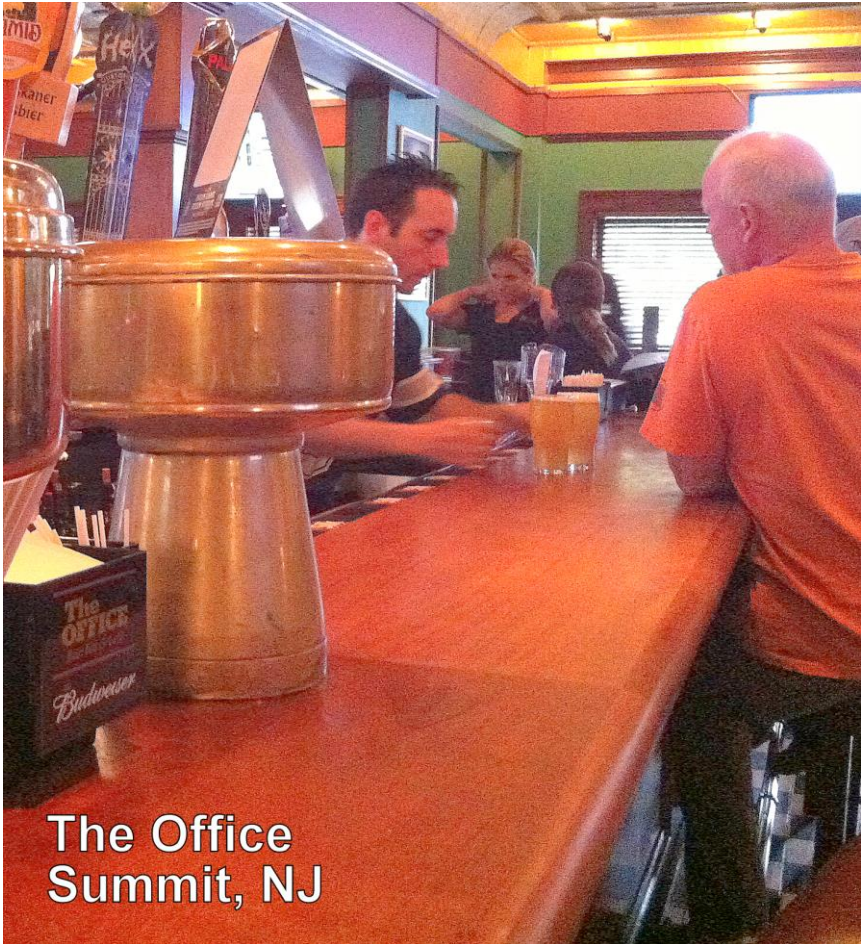
**Murphy's Law also applies to icing... those who don't care get the coveted corner while those who live for cake get stuck with those measly middle pieces.**

**In the past hunting was a necessity but also a choice, since some people preferred that to farming or foraging. Now activists say there's no need to hunt so it shouldn't be allowed. Unless they get all their protein from vegies I think their argument is ridiculous. Yes, there are despicable forms of hunting but the person who hunts fairly and utilizes his prey legitimately is more honorable than those grocery store carnivores who complain.**

**We're not sheep... people are designed to tear, chew and digest all kinds of food... including meat.**

**I stopped eating sweets two days ago and heard my stomach growl for the first time in years. Still I need to concentrate on eating the right things, more often ...decisions, decisions!**

**When that cake or burger's set before you, think about how many times you've eaten the exact same thing. How many times do we have to experience a food before realizing we're beating a dead horse? Less is better, delayed gratification helpful and past experiences are sufficient to help us pass up things that won't *do a body good*.**



## The Office Summit, NJ

**I hate to think how many times I've "done lunch" and it's turned me into a giant lunch box... stuffed to the gills.**

The best I can say about today's lunch is, "I could have done worse" and that's not saying much!

**Try to do a little bit better each day, or at least don't lose ground. The simple but devilish formula for weight loss is still fewer calories, avoiding certain foods and exercising.**



**The most important part is reducing calories, since few have the time and energy to sweat away much weight.**

Apparently I'm here to consume cake in as many forms and as much quantity as possible -- damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!

“Avoid fruits and nuts. You are what you eat”... Jim Davis

### **Freedom and Free Speech**

**“When the people of Burma can stop thinking about whether or not they're free then perhaps they'll be free”... Aung San Suu Kyi**

**So don't stop questioning whether or not your free... it's when you get *too comfortable* that your problems really begin.**

**I truly appreciate the freedom to express ourselves but half the countries in the world have it too, so while respecting our military I don't worship it. Ironically our soldiers don't ask for veneration that's just a ploy used by chicken hawks and profiteers to keep the kettle boiling.**

**Anyone can be an activist and we're encouraged to get involved... that is as long as we're fighting for what the boss considers *right* and those who would muzzle critics are making us more like North Korea all the time.**

**You say that countries with freedom of speech have that right because we protect it for them and I don't entirely dismiss your claim. Obviously freedom isn't free but there's no way of telling how many of the wars we've waged were worth the price in blood and treasure. Arguably some and possibly even most of them were mistakes.**

Everyone's concerned about Wikileaks and some want Julian Assange arrested or killed. I'm not concerned about Wiki leaking embarrassing messages between corrupt, meddling politicians and governments. Of course innocent lives shouldn't be put at risk but I wonder to what extent that argument is a pretext to panic us into allowing the government to classify anything they want as *top secret*?

Ideas offending the PC police end up on the cutting room floor, while those parroting the party line receive air time... nothing new about that!

The powerful want debate to occur within the framework they provide. Shouting fire in a theatre should be illegal but that kind of thing should be the extent of the limiting free speech.

I agree in principle with Ben Franklin that "if we don't all hang together, then surely, we shall all hang separately." It's best to stand up for everyone's free speech but there should be exceptions to that rule. Ben and the boys were in danger of being hung by the British, which made that axiom quite logical, but to "hang with", and if necessary defend the speech rights of those who would destroy you and yours, is giving them the rope to hang you.

If someone's mission is to destroy your way of life and your people, isn't it foolish to aid and abet them? Even if heaven far better than this world don't hand it to those whose views you find repulsive. If the government promotes the above resist and if that's hopeless, fight or move on...know what I mean jellybean?

Why talk politics with friends and relatives, when we disagree and I'm a one lone voice? On the other hand why not? It's tough but being shunned or shouted down for expressing yourself is a lot better scenario than dissidents elsewhere in

the world contend with. If freedom of speech *with an asterisk* is to be overcome, people must raise their voices when the opportunity presents and deal with the consequences as best they can!

**One thing considered even more "traitorous" than criticizing the military is questioning anything canonized by society's major cults. Freedom of speech has caveats, rules, regulations and punishments.**

Funny how the very young and very old are free to say any fool thing they want while everyone else must speak *responsibly*.

Sure freedom of speech is allowed as long as it poses no threat to the powerful but mount a serious challenge and see how long you last!

Our system's preferable to most but it seems we're trying to force it on others... don't you catch more bees with honey?

We have substantial freedom of speech but we're also advised to "agree" instead of to think and to go with the flow, instead of making waves. It's unlikely we have to worry about our door being kicked in by the police but it's neither impossible or without precedent. It is woven into the fabric of every society to squash those who might overturn the apple cart...

In lieu of free speech, the expert recommended; confession, therapy and medication... hmmm.

Should we be able to choose whose "free speech" and other special rights we want to defend... or must we defend the rights of others, no matter how onerous we consider their agendas? I dislike the government telling us, who's right, who's wrong, who to defend and who to smack!

"None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free"... Goethe



Las Vegas - "At Least We're Not your Kids!"

### Freedom of Association

**"I won't belong to any organization that would have me as a member"... Groucho Marx**

**We should associate without quotas or interference be they from *public service* announcements, the media or think tanks. If people weren't manipulated into unwanted associations they'd have less reason to consider discrimination and all the other unsavory aspects of free choice.**

**You should be able to associate freely based on any criteria you want, be it serious or superficial. That being said we've no right to impede anyone's life, liberty or pursuit of happiness... and neither do they.**

**I'd say I'm Euro-American-Middle Eastern centric but the PC police wouldn't like that. I have nothing against anyone's culture but resent being "encouraged" to embrace the ones that are approved, endorsed and in style. As with freedom of speech, it's obvious that freedom of association comes with a big fat asterisk.**

**Diversity's great when people can decide for themselves how much of it they want but diversity engineered by the self-appointed masters of the universe is not.**

**Funny thing about freedom of association is, the pickier you are about who you hang out with, the pickier others are about hanging with you... is that karma, payback or the breaks?**

**It's entirely reasonable to insist that everyone respect the rights of others but to demand that American's accept the *party line* is not... the founding fathers would never had submitted to that.**

## **Freedom Of Religion**

**"Freedom of religion is central to the ability of people to live together".... Barak Obama**

**Wow, the president and I actually agree on something! Just because a religion calls itself "superior" or is the most popular doesn't prove that it's the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth...**

**Like our other basic freedoms; speech, association etc. freedom of religion comes with an asterisk. The more "out there" you are, the more you can expect to have to deal with**

**negative consequences from those who don't really like freedom for other points of view.**

**A man was commended for converting thousands of people to his religion. Call me crazy but I wonder if he'd be doing a better thing if he taught them to respect all religions? To many people the correct answer is leading them to *their* religion. Most people are taught that their religion is the only valid one and that by converting others, they'll be rewarded in the hereafter - crowns, virgins and all that...**

**Call me crazy but I'd like to see is more religious entrepreneurship in the form of new churches and religions. There are currently several great religions in the world, most of which aspire to gain a religious monopoly and "defeat" their rivals. It's a case of our beloved concept of diversity being conveniently swept under the rug!**

**New churches and religions are usually called evil cult by the established ones, just as they were when they started. As long as they are miniscule and mind their manners, new churches tend to be ignored by the big ones who have more important things to do.**

**Those claiming to be pathologically ethical are invariably sinners and no better than those they judge. If *anyone's* life is *examined* the double dealing, hypocrisy and iniquity becomes apparent so we should be slow to point fingers or make pious claims.**

**"I hold it to be the inalienable right of anybody to go to hell in his own way"... Robert Frost**

## Friends, Romans, Countrymen (Lend me your...)

“Don't surround yourself with yourself move on back to squares”... Yes

In other words... if you're “cool” get to know some squares... and vice versa.

“Friends don't do friends that way”... well actually they do. They shouldn't but they do so you have to decide is it worth hanging in there. Hopefully it is... after all, like us our friends are only human.

Friends they're all a little nuts, all a little crazy... but what would we do without them!

We're all broken but none of us are beyond repair, it's a matter of seeing the forest for the trees.

Feuding with a friend? Maybe there's room on the *high road* for both of you.

Stories? No one wants to hear your stories... they want to tell you theirs. The only exception is your Mom so take good care of her! On a related note, no one remembers what you've done for them but they'll remember what they did for you till their dying day... it's all so natural.

Funny how the things that made us friends later conspired to ruin our friendship... or maybe we just didn't really know each other in the first place.





WTC 9.12 from  
Hoboken, NJ

**When a friend does you wrong don't retaliate... instead ask yourself, why did they do that? Was it immaturity, cruelty, jealousy, or did you "have it coming?" In any case, be slow to anger, try to determine the cause and correct your behavior, or attempt to soften theirs. If the crapola continues and you can't resolve things, its probably better to move on... but don't be in a hurry to dump old friends. The *jerky boy* friend you know, may be better than that *perfect* one waiting in the wings.**



**Friendships require *maintenance* and friends create problems for each another but dealing with these is better than being an *island*. There are however times to cut your losses and move on.**

Does you buddy want friends or does he want minions? If it's the latter, then true friendship's a hopeless proposition.

Everyone wants friends, respect, esteem, status, love, appreciation and validation and much of what we do in life is towards that end.

**Be assured friends remember the stupid things we say and do... not the good stuff.**

**My wife's a socialite which is good because I'm a social-lite.**

**You can *rank* your friends by counting birthday cards and checking the price on the back. You can also *rank* them by hiding a recorder and listening to what they say about you... but I wouldn't recommend it!.**

**I've been playing phone tag with a buddy for years and wondering if we really want to hang out, or are we attempting to "stay in touch" out of a sense of obligation? I think we respect each other and we're trying to "do the right thing", but don't really want to hang out together.**

**I've found that despite the gaffs I commit on a regular basis, most of my friends have been quite forgiving... I should be the same!**

**Everyone's has holes in their story, some just a few and others are like Swiss cheese. We are however redeemable and repairable and those are very hopeful things!**

I told my kids that I'd never had an *intelligent* conversation with a black person and they were appalled. Later I realized that I and my few blacks friends probably avoided discussing controversial subjects with. It hasn't led to greater mutual understanding but it has allowed us to remain friends at least marginally... and that's more than I can say about the people with whom I've had *intelligent* conversations.

Maintain friendships as much as possible, even with those who are letting you down. Have friends who drink (if you can resist their lifestyle), religious friends and middle of the road friends and you'll learn the pros and cons of each. If necessary jettison those who abuse you and to whom friendship has become a liability.

"When the character of a man is not clear to you, look at his friends"...Proverb

### Generation Gasp

**"The good old days weren't always good and tomorrow not as bad as it seems"... Billy Joel**

**My generation's called the "me generation" by the one before us, mine calls the next generation names too and on and on it goes. Every generation starts out a "me generation" but events can intervene and elevate them to great heights.**

The World War II generation, along with the Revolutionary War and Civil War generations may have been our finest. The soldiers bravery and sacrifices were unparalleled... what more can you say?

**Kennedy, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, Obama... different generations with *changing* values but the one thing they agree on is raw power and world domination.**



**Story, Indiana**

**Some generations are tested more and those that passed deserve respect but veneration is going too far. There are genuine heroes around but they're outnumbered by opportunistic loudmouths. Don't automatically accept their claims as some people dishonestly exploit the sacrifices of those who never came home.**

**"The lessons of the past are ignored and obliterated in a contemporary antagonism known as the generation gap"...**  
**Spiro T. Agnew**

## **Genius and Stupidity**

**“Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe”... Albert Einstein**

**Since we only use a fraction of our brain cells couldn't someone *know everything* if they used all their brain cells? Not by a longshot because like the universe knowledge is infinite!**

**I could count all the stupid things I've done on one hand but I'd have to do it a million times.**

**Are some people *head and shoulders* above the rest or just *shoulders* above? It doesn't matter because no one has the right to control the lives of others... if you want to rule someone get a dog... but be kind.**

**A genius can delude himself as easily as a moron can... but the genius is likelier to successfully dupe the rest of us.**

**A fellow I know claimed to be a genius but I don't remember him ever demonstrating it... that's what I call a waste of talent.**

**There *are* child prodigies but mostly there're kids with google on their phones and a knack for repeating what grownups say. For their part the adults are thrilled to be validated by *their* little geniuses.**

**You *may* be the smartest person I know but you're not smarter than all those who've come before, so I'll listen to their wisdom not yours.**

Were we created self-aware or did this gradually become a human trait? If self-awareness evolved and/or was learned, did the belief in God follow a similar path and did the concepts of heaven and hell evolved as well? If you're not self-aware none of these are important but if you are, they become crucial.

There's self-awareness and there's perspective, the second being more susceptible to *variation*. Everyone with a properly working mind has self-awareness but perspective can be more elusive. On the flip side, can animals have perspective even if they lack self-awareness?

Why is Einstein considered greater than; Darwin, Edison, Galileo and the rest? I think it's because his discoveries led to the greatest weapon ever created. In a society bent on world domination, discoveries that facilitate our success on the battle field trump those of medicine, industry and commerce... not to mention trivialities like arts and humanities.

None of the great geniuses of history were perfect, right all the time or acting completely alone. Edison had a crack team of associates and Einstein learned from Riemann and others. Most great discoveries are improved upon and sometimes found to have holes in them. All of Edison's inventions have been improved upon, Darwin's theories criticized and Einstein's "Unified Theory" called into question.

You're not doing kids a favor by calling them a genius. All that does is encourage them to take their foot off the gas and coast... there's nothing left to prove once they've been "certified."

It's been an Inspector Clouseau kind of day and I'm wondering who came first Clouseau or Cousteau?

**You'll make more with your brains than your back but if you combine them you can do very well. The key's not to rely entirely on muscles... that's what motors are for.**

**Life can be episode after episode of poetic justice as I've found out repeatedly. It comes in many forms and usually involves getting one's *just deserts*.**

**Sometimes it's good to be dumb, since it makes one unaware of conventional wisdom and allows stumbling upon solutions. Never the less, being dumb isn't the best way to go through life.**

Can you be smart and ignorant at the same time? I think so, since smart's the ability to learn and ignorance is the failure to do so.

Despite humanity's accumulated knowledge, we're still clueless compared to animals which seem stupid but are born with abilities we can never acquire. Heck, squid can instantly change colors to camouflage themselves ... I'll never learn that!

"Don't try to be smarter than the problem"... Sam Zemurray

## **God**

**"I gave in, and admitted that God was God"... C. S. Lewis.**

**I like Mr. Lewis' quote but wonder if he has a definition of God that the rest of us must accept or be damned? The conundrum for me is the various and vague *definitions* of God out there... even within his own religion.**

**Funny how we get God smacked after claiming a God wink... it's like pride coming before the fall. One of mine came after**

boasting that we hadn't had ants in a year... guess what appeared the next day? At least it was gentle because he can be a lot more forceful!

**I believe in an all-powerful God think that parting seas and raising the dead would be small potatoes for him.**

**Randomness or rhyme and reason which is the hall mark of God?**

Meanwhile back at the ranch you tell me I must believe as you do or burn in hell. You tell me about God's power and love but the vagaries of your account are enormous. I don't expect you to know everything but all you have are incredible stories and terrible threats. There's nothing consistent about your story except its self-serving nature.

**So is that God talking or just people talking "on his behalf?" I get the feeling there're lots of ventriloquists out to further their own ambitions.**

**The man said there's two choices, the God scenario and the no God scenario. That isn't quite entrapment but it's a graduated approach to insisting you must accept his version of God. I accept the God scenario but not necessarily *his* God scenario.**

I'm guessing Jesus knew there were fakes and scammers and still he said give everything to the poor. That makes it the gold standard but I still plan to vote for the guy who'll make people act responsibly...even if they're poor.

**If ancient aliens influenced or micromanaged human affairs then surely they're not our God. If this vast universe is full of intelligent beings would God really be interested in**

**micromanaging everything on earth? Obviously being omnipotent he'd be able too but I don't think that proves he does.**

**What if I want to pray to God one day and to Jesus the next? According to some, I must pray only to Jesus as he's man's sole intercessor. Others say you can pray to his mother and others say you can pray to his father in heaven, which according to most is the same as praying to him. All I know is it's all a bit confusing...**

**Is God an old man with a long white beard, a pillar of light, a voice in a burning bush or what? If he is a man with a beard, is he white, black, Asian or what? It's all very problematic when people try to describe God... especially when they almost certainly have no idea what they're talking about!**

**Would I serve a God who allows the vast majority of humans to burn in hell forever? If I believed God did that I *might* but I suspect *that* doctrine comes from man, not the God of creation.**

**Since the God of the Bible can be; angry, jealous and vindictiveness, are we being *godly* when we act that way?**

**If the devil's in the details, then he's the one who makes you spill your coffee, pocket dials and mutes your phone at the wrong time.**

**Did God save the godless communists from the godless Nazis when Russia repelled Hitler? Was God allowing the lesser of two evils to prevail... or was something else going on?**

**Since God is omnipotent and omnipresent, able to see and know everything all the time are we his eyes and ears?**



Can the God of our universe travel to other universes, if they exist? Is he the God of those as well? Is he a he, is he a committee, karma an equation or something else? Despite all the fancy talk I don't think anyone really knows.

God has to be tough... this is quite an enterprise he's running, with lots of moving parts and plenty of bad players. He *may* have a sense of humor but that doesn't mean he tolerates back talk!

**I am not trying to be disrespectful and it's wonderful that Jesus offers to be our intercessor but is there anything wrong with praying directly to God?**

**"I believe that there's an intelligence to the universe, with the exception of certain parts of New Jersey"... Woody Allen**

## **Golden Rule**

"Practicing the Golden Rule is not a sacrifice; it is an investment"... unknown

The Golden Rule has been around for thousands of years and where it started is impossible to say but here're some early "Golden Rule" quotes:

Buddhism: 560 BC, From the Udanavarga 5:18- "Hurt not others with that which pains yourself."

Judaism: 1300 BC, Leviticus 19:18- "Thou shalt Love thy neighbor as thyself."

Hinduism: 3200 BC, From the Hitopadesa- "One should always treat others as they themselves wish to be treated."

Zoroastrianism: 600 BC, From the Shast-na-shayast 13:29- "Whatever is disagreeable to yourself, do not do unto others."

Confucianism: 557 BC, From the Analects 15:23- "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."



That I don't live up to the golden rule is due to my failings and to your expecting me to see things *your way*. Trying to live by the Golden Rule shouldn't be confused with being a door mat!

You can practice the rule by trying to treat people fairly and with due respect or *foolishly* you can practice it by being a door mat. There have always been people out there looking for tools and we should avoid them. They encourage you to be a cog in their wheel and if you decide to think for yourself they'll deter you, or worse.

**Someone piss you off, about to lose your cool? Take a deep breath or exhale, whichever comes first. Chances are you'll feel better and won't make a spectacle of yourself.**

When individuals or society allow deadbeats to abuse their generosity are they really practicing the Golden rule? A good man who's down wants a hand up more than a hand out and welfare without accountability does him little good.

Every family has a member who's prodigal, traumatized, addicted or disabled. We can take care of them ourselves, let them go down the drain or depend on society to help. America's devised a system where the government bears the brunt but it's bloated and *enables* more than rehabilitates. Let's use our taxes to truly heal people instead of to bomb "nasties" the world over.

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets"... Matthew 7:12

**Hmmm... but would ye be saved?**

## **Good and Evil, *Us and Them*...**

**“Evil is a form of incompetence”...Allan Bullock**

**There’s good in just about everyone but occasionally it’s so outweighed by malevolence that the person must be stopped... a guy named Adolph comes to mind.**

**Judaism replaced the gods of Greece and Rome with Yahweh eliminating, most moral grey areas in the process. There became only good or evil, them or against them. The pantheon had nuanced characters which Judaism and Christianity rejected. They decided to keep things simple and drastic if you disagree with them.**

**“When you look up in the sky, you might see the stars and still not see the light”... The Eagles. Just like “the forest for the trees”... we always think *we’re* right and *they’re* wrong.**

**The fact that someone had a terrible childhood helps explain why someone committed a heinous crime but it doesn’t excuse it. Maybe we should post “though shalt not kill” signs and inform lawyers their clients had no excuse and will receive no reprieve.**

**Liking *us* doesn’t mean hating *them* and disagreeing with what *they* do doesn’t mean agreeing with what *we* do.**

**If one feels no guilt does it mean he’s innocent? Does sleeping soundly mean you’re *right*? Life’s simple when we reject all nuance and trust our conscience. If everything’s perfectly clear I guess you’re really lucky... or are you?**

**I want the right to bear arms because I live among men who follow leaders like sheep which makes them more dangerous than lions. There may be no arms powerful enough to**

**guarantee that tyrants can't usurp our rights but when enough brave people band together despots fall like a ton of bricks.**

**Darkness is our nemesis, it's when we stumble and things go, bump in the night... but is it actually evil?**

**We personalize good and evil too much, implying *we're* good, *they're* bad and telling folks to join *the good fight*. Society needs improvement but to constantly pick fights elsewhere while our society crumbles makes no sense at all.**

**"America... goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy"... John Quincy Adams**



World Trade Center Rising,  
seen from Hoboken, NJ 9.12



## GOSSIP

**“The only thing worse than being talked about is not being talked about”...Oscar Wilde**

**If you keep your mouth shut you’ll hear the good stuff and s be *expected* to pass it down the line. If you feed the grapevine you’ll be rewarded by those who need you as a *conduit*.**

**We’ve all heard, “at least they can’t say that about me” but they can, will and already have... fortunately you have the right to ignore them.**

**What’s crazier caring about gossip, or history? Gossip seems frivolous to some but most people are more interested in that than the fate of the planet!**

**First you ask what I believe, then you tell me what I *must* believe. Are you interested in my salvation or just enjoy gossiping about *who's going to hell*. You take *heathens* on as projects but drop them like hot potatoes if they don’t respond expeditiously. What are you interested in, spreading the word or brownie points?**

**People look for dirt and the more they probe the more they find, so don’t give them a rope to hang you!**

**“Today's gossip is tomorrow's headline”... Walter Winchell**

## Government

**“I don’t make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts” ...Will Rogers**

**I’ve no problem with a government that protects people’s natural, constitutional and God given rights but can’t even say “two out of three’s not bad” for this one.**

**Protect our shores and ships, fill holes, care for the needy, arrest thieves, killers and rapists, keep drunks off the road and if there's anything left, cure disease... that would be a good government!**

**Apparently we have to be ruled by conventional wisdom, since anything else blows our minds. People want to feel safe and the unconventional seems to threaten that feeling.**

**We should be ruled by wise men but that's rarely the case. Instead we're courted by demagogues and scoundrels who lead us astray. We're seduced by charisma which isn't what we should look for in leaders but it gets us every time!**

**Citizens are governed, subjects are ruled... increasingly we're the latter.**

**I see government as a racket, generally not beneficial but necessary since anarchy's usually worse. That being said, even a democratically elected government tends to be a corrupt and largely negative institution.**

**It's getting to the point that I don't care who's running the show... I'm just trying to survive whoever's in power and the mischief they make.**

**Are people designed to be governed? Certainly there are some who don't mind being subjects instead of citizens. Subjects are content to be ruled as long as they receive their bread and circus.**

**Everyone deserves protection from assault and exploitation but beyond that I can't think of many things we're *entitled* to. Guaranteed healthcare would be wonderful but why should some be forced to buy it for others? Especially when "a few" refuse to work.**

**"A Republic, if you can keep it!" Ben Franklin**

## Granny Nanny State

**“Tyranny... exercised for the good of its victim may be the most oppressive. It may be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies”...C. S. Lewis**

**Grandpa gave grandma the keys to the castle and she promptly locked him out. With all due respect to grannies, no man surrenders his rights to an old woman but few can resist a beautiful woman and to these future granny’s we’ve given control of western civilization!**

**Grandma had problems that needed to be addressed but equality should be granted without giving up either sexes natural rights. Now due to the sacred vote men are allowing slow motion enslavement. The long arm of the law is now a tool of the majority and further subjugates us. People are jailed because yin doesn’t like what yang smokes but she’s bamboozled by predatory men *we* can spot a mile away and would swiftly dispatch if the law wasn’t an ass.**

**I don’t know how bees got the way they are but we’re getting *there* through democracy, which wonderful *in theory* can stink in practice. As De Tocqueville pointed out, democracy becomes a paradise for slackers once they muster the votes to steal from their neighbors.**

**Not only do most Americans like our system, most foreigners also thirst for credit cards and flat screens.**

**The *masters of the universe* are likely to prevail against the thundering herd of humans who don’t mind being *managed*, as long as they’re “taken care of” from cradle to grave. Whether it’s Soylent Green, nanny states, or a beehive society, we seem to have nothing to live for except earthly pleasures.**



**We should be a society of just and reasonable laws but that's impossible in the social welfare system foisted upon us. In the nanny state, we're forced via taxation to support those who work at reproducing themselves like bees and depend on honey supplied by other workers.**



Funny how the most liberal states have slogans like "live free or die", but also have the most intrusive "nanny" governments. Welfare recipients have also adopted the slogan, "live free or

die", realizing they can *live for free*, because nobody wants even the laziest members of society to die from starvation. I believe we have been duped!

**To be fair, some women who don't want a nanny state and lots of men do.**

**It's not just a nanny state, it's a granny state, because deep inside, every female thinks like a granny. That may be a good thing for women but not good for males of any age.**

**"We're all the same inside from one to ninety-nine"...**  
**Martina McBride**

## **Greed**

**"There are many things that we would throw away if we were not afraid that others might pick them up" ... Oscar Wilde**

**In "Wall Street", Gordon Gekko said, "greed is good" and many nodded their head in agreement. Now we're told speculators are good and again many nod yes. I'm not buying it and though greed's natural and can be good, bad or indifferent, I think it's mostly the latter two.**

**Brains and greed combined are scary and though brains aren't evenly distributed, greed certainly is!**

**Where does corporate greed and investor interest diverge? Surely they're intertwined but the richer one is the more he benefits from the system. Average investors benefit much less and only a pittance trickles down to the working class. Thinkers have always earned more than doers but the disparity's gotten ridiculous. It's criminal when *moguls* make a thousand times more than workers, not to mention it's usually accomplished by cronyism and manipulation.**

We grumbled but bailed out the bankers after they lost at their derivative bets... I'd rather have bailed out Las Vegas gamblers! Wall Street's kingpins convinced us their failure would lead to Main Street's failure, which would have been worth the price if it had resulted in the banksters demise. We would likely have come back stronger in the long run... whereas continued domination by banksters will lead to ruin and debt slavery. The only *skin* they're willing to risk is yours, after all their motto is *OPM*!

It's no wonder these guys are so greedy...they're worth millions but owe billions! Instead of having a second car or a second home they have ex-spouses, yachts and other *holes* they pour money into.

Noticing birds fighting over nests, turtles over sunny spots, dogs over bones and people over everything imaginable, one realizes that greed is universal.

Another thing distinguishing us from beasts is storage. Not just food, because even squirrels do that... I mean a *store of value* such as gold, silver or wampum. When man invented money he had one more excuse to pillage and plunder, since he could now exchange his victim's property for a more portable form of booty. In its latest incarnation wealth takes the form of bytes stored in the clouds or traveling at light speed.

Is it just me or is Anthony Mozzilo the spitting image of Caligula?

Funny thing...when *I'm* "competitive" it's greed and when *you're* competitive it's "the American way!"

**“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed”... Mahatma Gandhi**



## **Green Acres!**

**“If people think nature is their friend, then they sure don't need an enemy”... Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.**

**The Carpenter Bees are increasingly territorial and resent my presence. It looks like a fight to the finish with another of Mother Nature's little warriors. I'm glad they pollinate the apple trees but don't like them drilling holes in the pergola so I'm trying to *compromise*. Those who stay off the deck live, those who don't die... maybe we'll end up with a few I can get along with.**

**Other than Roses why do we plant things with thorns? Other than keeping people from climbing in windows pricklers shouldn't tolerated much less cultivated.**

**Coming home from a weekend of hard work at the farm house, I turn on the business channel to look at the market. I hope to be rewarded for busting my hump by the sight of my investments going up but *alas* that's not how things work.**

**After leaving shoes on the farmhouse porch a freaking ecosystem's taken up residence in them and what bothers me most are the darn spiders. It's like a friend told said, “I don't mind snakes or bats but I hate spiders!”**

**Visitors advise me to *fix that, cut that and ya da, ya da, ya da*. Don't they realize I already have a “to do” list? The dead branch is on the list but will have to wait as I don't want to fall out of a tree with a chainsaw again. I'd rather look at a dead limb than have one.**

**The Multi-Flora roses attack along with their friends the mosquitos...next time I'll use the Deep Woods Off! The blood sucking skeeters are bad but the wild roses are even**

worse as they take their *pound of flesh*... I hope the Round Up does what it says and kills them *roots and all!*

It's in the upper 90s today and the only things not dying are the bugs and weeds... they love this weather!

I'm pulling the tractor out to cut the grass as my neighbor weed whacks his... it's amazing how much fossil fuel we consume attempting to conquer nature.

Cutting the grass on a riding mower is a good time to do some thinking... heck even Lady Chatterley's quiet when she's riding a Deere.

Just saw a snake in the rock pile and I'm imagining ten more. Saw another one in the barn but left it alone...I'd rather have *it* than the vermin it's after.

We plant gardens to connect to our past and on some level to prepare for the day when having potatoes in the ground could be a life saver.

I see that a Cardinal's been eating my tomatoes...he sits on the cage and helps himself. So what do I like more, birds or veggies? I don't mind losing a few tomatoes in order to enjoy the red bird but the pigeons in our barn are another matter. There's crap everywhere and I may have to resort to *target practice*.

I'm all for better living through chemistry but not for being poisoned with weed and bug killers, I just hope it's not too late.

As I struggle against the English Ivy that is taking over the yard, I wonder how it got its name. Does it come from England, or is it so named because like the English, it overwhelms the *natives*? Like the people from whence its name's derived, it's superbly



adapted and impossible to stop. It scoffs at Roundup making spraying an exercise in futility and a waste of money... the profits of which goes to Anglos on one side of the pond or the other.

Months later springtime arrives and once again it's time to fight the English... the Ivy that is. The English are a great people and I wish them the best!

Came to Brown Co to cut the grass and after spraying the weeds it rained torrentially washing the herbicide away. I'm glad to have used cheap Chinese Roundup instead of the "real thing."

Every time I do something to make our yard look better my neighbor up's the ante. I finally make ours look like an office park so the guy across the street makes his look like the Taj Mahal. Maybe I should just "pave paradise and put up a parking lot..."

**What's better for a fish story a photo or the actual fish? The actual fish is a known commodity and impossible to "improve upon." Meanwhile a photo taken from the *right* angle is the basis for a much better yarn!**

**A colony of bats is living upstairs and as I remove the rotted floor they serenade me with an eerie symphony. I'm none too comfortable especially when one flies past me like Count Dracula. They don't like me messing with their ancient abode but they might as well get used to it.**

**After an exhausting day at the farm house I'm almost home but mother nature has planned one last insult. It's the dead skunk that's been stinking up Raceway Road all week and it gets me again, filling my car with an acrid stench!**

**As I rounded the corner of the house one of the resident Bumblebees stung me on the eyelid. Out for revenge I killed**

**one of them the next day so they're keeping a low profile...  
they know what's up!**

**"Look out sister, anything that grows out here will either, stab,  
sting or bite you" ... Rooster Cogburn**

## **Groupthink**

**"Can a mortal ask questions which God finds  
unanswerable? Quite easily, I should think. All  
nonsense questions are unanswerable"... C. S. Lewis**

**Having been taught that there are "no stupid  
questions", I'm at odds with C.S. if that's what he  
means by "nonsense." Calling unanswerable questions  
*nonsense* allows Lewis the luxury of not having to deal  
with questions he can't answer.**

**I've found some good quotes by C.S. but think he's  
mainly a thought policeman intent of steering us to his  
conclusions by any means at his disposal.**

**Some things *are* better left unsaid but we shouldn't have  
monitors telling us what they are. Seems the monitors are the  
same people who tell us to speak our minds...at least until we  
say something they don't like!**

**Scientists describe the bee hive as having one mind, one brain  
and one purpose and the same is somewhat true of human  
society. The difference is, the hive's intelligence is influenced  
and directed by the environment, while human groupthink is  
directed by ideology and propaganda.**

**It's a rare friend with whom you can discuss politics and  
religion when you're not in agreement. I thought I had such**



friends but learned there are repercussions for not subscribing to *the list* of approved viewpoints.

Is it alright to think for myself, or should I ignore what sense God gave me and dutifully accept what I'm told by society and scripture? Should I think independently half the time and be *good* the other half? Think I'll value the wisdom of those who came before us, scriptural or otherwise, while not forsaking the curiosity God instilled in me.

This is America where *anything is possible...* so why is it I would have a better chance of being published if I was a writer in a small country? It's because here I'm a small fish in a very large pond... at least I hope that's the reason is.

The more I think about it, the more I believe Americans are the most groupthink afflicted people in the world, although we have the right to criticize *the government* we only criticize the other party.

The thing that gets me about pundits is how they're such dyed in the wool conventional thinkers. Almost without exception they argue over minutia while accepting if not promoting groupthink. I suppose that's the case in every country but we're too proud of ourselves to consider that a possibility.

Should I "do the right thing" and say I'll defend to the death people's right to say anything? Maybe I'm nuts but I'd rather not have the government tell me who I'm supposed to defend and who I must fight. I foolishly want to be sovereign but society insists I be "part of the group" and act on its behalf.



There are people determined to have a *full quiver* of kids who're are responsible enough to bear the expense themselves and I applaud them. There're also people intentionally having children on society's dime and others mindlessly reproducing and I oppose them both. It is a form of ethnic cleansing to lay your eggs in someone else's nest. The wise bird pushes these eggs back to the biological parents making them raise their own chicks.

**If you have no children you're relieved of worrying about your own blood line and can think about what's best for humankind...I think cat people do this best.**

**In Colorado, a white supremacist group adopted a mile of highway and picked up trash. This didn't go over well with the CNN pundit who suggested people retaliate by dumping trash on that stretch. When interviewed, the supremacist spokesman said they're doing good things, as opposed to dealing drugs or running guns. I wonder how long it will take for the supremacists to get the boot and how long we'll have to wait for a street gang to adopt a mile?**

**Meanwhile back at the ranch, a lieutenant governor was flambéed for suggesting that the poor are like animals. He implied that welfare allows them to overbreed at society's expense because they don't think past that activity. He was criticized but I think he was only partly wrong... he said "they don't think past that activity" but some not only *think past it* they're actually quite conscious and pursuing revenge by replacement.**

**"And everyone here, hates everyone here for doing just like they do. It's best if we all keep this quiet instead"...Matchbox 20**

## **Haters, Sickos and Sociopaths**

**"You labeled me. I'll label you. So I dub thee unforgiven."...  
Metallica**

**Hatred like beauty is in the eye of the beholder...in other words it's subjective.**

**One says "you're going to hell" and the other says, "you're a hater!"... they have more in common than they'd care to admit.**

Calling someone a hater because he doesn't accept your agenda is an effective way of galvanizing *the base* and turning them against him ... it's also despicable.

Haters are blamed and blamers are haters... its two sides of the coin and despite protests to the contrary we all suffer from this character flaw. Maybe blaming the other guy is a coping mechanism from deep in our brains.



Sorry but we're all blamers and to some extent we're all haters. We think our plan is the solution and our adversary's the problem. Granted morality's a bell curve of sorts but we're human and speak peace but vote war when it suits our needs.

The word "hater" is primarily used to *describe* those on the other side of the aisle. A funny sight is the "T" shirt proclaiming "even haters love me" and I wonder, is the wearer being a hypocrite or just naïve?

If you wander beyond the boundaries of political correctness, you may be labeled a hater and abandoned by friends who want to avoid *guilt by association*.

I'd like to declare that I've never hated anyone but being human that would be a lie.

I've heard sociopaths defined as people who are so narcissistic they never think anything is their fault. By that definition, everyone I know is on the *sociopath spectrum*. You can be labeled a sociopath for *subversive* ideas or for refusing to toe the line. As usual the judgment is made by those with power and the intent to keep it.

The word racist has become a popular word to direct anyone foolish enough to say anything beyond the *established* group think on the subject.

When people are kept busy they've precious little time to ponder their situation. If they abandon their grindstone they're labeled antisocial and face the consequences of their rebelliousness. We're encouraged to tidy the house, attend *functions* and spending our reserves on *celebrations*. As long as we're kept in a state of perpetual busyness we never get around to challenging those who are so good at managing our affairs!



**The more you conform to societies expectations the less likely it is that you'll be labeled a deviant, troublemaker or weirdo. The more independent you are the more likely you'll be called those.**

Hater as it' s now used wasn't even part of our vocabulary until a few years ago, but it' s sure caught on! Counter-kudos to whoever coined it... they gave muckrakers what they wanted, another way to divide people.

**There's a bell curve, a spectrum of love and hate. We're all on it and frequently move from side to side especially vis-à-vis the people we know. Being human there've been too many times I've said what I hate, then hated what I've said.**

**Poison, be it vileness or venom can be survived in small doses and we can develop some immunity but excessive exposure leads to decay and can make a man as toxic as the instigator.**

**Reject hatred without hating"...Mary Baker Eddy**

### **Homo habilis (aka "Handy-man")**

**"To many men work on parts of things, doing a job to completion satisfies me"... Richard Proenneke**

**Homo habilis was an early hominid whose name means "handy man" because this was one of the earliest species to make and use stone tools. Sometimes I'm no more adept than these hairy fellows.**

**Funny how soon as you fix one thing something else breaks...it's true in all aspects of life and it's what keeps us going, or makes us want to end it all!**

**When it comes to working around the house, there're just so many hours and so much gas in my tank and I'm running on fumes.**

**Installing a ceiling fans can be maddening and an hour into this one I realize why it was so inexpensive. Holes don't line up, screws don't fit and things are falling off right and left! After completing the installation I belatedly examine the old fan and to my surprise it works, the only thing wrong was a loose wire!**

**A rusty nail's no good for nailing but puts a nice hole in your foot or tire. Sweeping it up's a lot easier than fixing a tire or foot.**

**It's better not to use an old rope but if you have to, have a better plan than using the ground to stop your fall... that can be rather abrupt.**

**Has it been scientifically proven the last screw's the hardest to remove, or does it just seem that way?**

**Another messer upper is paper when you're cutting grass. It gravitates towards the mower wanting to be shredded and since I'm lazy it usually is! Unless held accountable hired mowers enjoy making confetti in my yard and I like shredding cans. It's fun, leaves very little mess and does no harm to the mower... I'm guessing it sharpens the blade.**

**Take care of your tools and don't worry about working them to death, that's what they're for and it's better them than you.**

**Humans aren't well adapted to the night. I hate to think how many toes have been stubbed, heads wacked and stairs fallen down thanks to the dark.**

**I trust humans' more than inanimate objects since I have *some idea* how we think. Tools on the other hand are out to get us so don't turn your back on them. They spend their**

**lives waiting to fall on a head or cut off a hand. It helps to pray when working and I think Joseph the patron saint of handymen has saved my butt a few times. Today a power saw fell off a beam and missed me by an inch... guess it shouldn't have been there!**

**Sooner or later everyone falls off a ladder, out of a tree or down the stairs... it just depends on what you do for a living.**

